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CONTENTS.

I. LUCIUS CAREY, LORD FALKLAND, . . .	<i>Fortnightly Review,</i> . . .	579
II. THE LADIES LINDORES. Part XV., . . .	<i>Blackwood's Magazine,</i> . . .	586
III. MISS EDGEWORTH. Part II., . . .	<i>Cornhill Magazine,</i> . . .	595
IV. THE CURE'S SISTER. Conclusion, . . .	<i>Argosy,</i> . . .	608
V. THE DECAY OF LITERATURE, . . .	<i>Cornhill Magazine,</i> . . .	617
VI. BACK FROM THE ROAD, . . .	<i>Cornhill Magazine,</i> . . .	625
VII. NO NEW THING. Part IX., . . .	<i>Cornhill Magazine,</i> . . .	628
VIII. THE LATEST WONDER OF ANTWERP, . . .	<i>Argosy,</i> . . .	634
IX. ST. BERNARDS, . . .	<i>St. James's Gazette,</i> . . .	639

POETRY.

HIDDEN, NOT LOST, . . .	578	PRIMROSES, . . .	578
MISCELLANY, . . .			640

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Single Numbers of THE LIVING AGE, 18 cents.

HIDDEN, NOT LOST.

As in his sleep a baby lies
Buried, till waking bids him rise ;
As in the acorn trees are hid,
To show themselves when summers bid ;
As in the mind clear faces lurk
Unseen till memory's wand shall work :
So sleeps my love within her grave —
Not 'neath that sod,
But there with God !

Alone,
Till, dying, I shall death obey,
And follow her the selfsame way
She went ;

Then shall I see her face to face —
The old delight with double grace —
And each to each shall wake from sleep,
Love's endless fellowship to keep —

Not there,
Beneath that rounded sod,

But there,
In heaven, in life with God !

Sunday Magazine.

MARY HARRISON.

PRIMROSES.

LATEST, earliest of the year,
Primroses that still were here,
Snugly nestling round the boles
Of the cut-down chestnut poles,
When December's tottering tread
Rustled 'mong the deep leaves dead,
And with confident young faces
Peeped from out the sheltered places
When pale January lay
In its cradle day by day,
Dead or living, hard to say,
Now that mid-March blows and blusters,
Out you steal in tufts and clusters,
Making leafless lane and wood
Vernal with your hardihood.
Other lovely things are rare,
You are prodigal as fair.
First you come by ones and ones,
Lastly in battalions,
Skirmish along hedge and bank,
Turn old Winter's wavering flank,
Round his flying footsteps hover,
Seize on hollow, ridge, and cover,
Leave nor slope nor hill unharried,
Till his snowy trenches carried,
O'er his sepulchre you laugh,
Winter's joyous epitaph.

This, too, be your glory great,
Primroses, you do not wait,
As the other flowers do,
For the spring to smile on you,
But with coming are content,
Asking no encouragement.
Ere the hardy crocus cleaves
Sunny borders 'neath the eaves,
Ere the thrush his song rehearse
Sweeter than all poets' verse,

Ere the early bleating lambs
Cling like shadows to their dams,
Ere the blackthorn breaks to white,
Snowy-hooded anchorite ;
Out from every hedge you look,
You are bright by every brook,
Weaving for your sole defence
Fearlessness of innocence.
While the daffodils still waver,
Ere the jonquil gets its savor,
While the linnets yet but pair,
You are fledged, and everywhere.
Nought can daunt you, nought distress,
Neither cold nor sunlessness.
You, when Lent sleet flies apace,
Look the tempest in the face ;
As descend the flakes more slow,
From your eyelids shake the snow,
And when all the clouds have flown,
Meet the sun's smile with your own.
Nothing ever makes you less
Gracious to ungraciousness.
March may bluster up and down,
Pettish April sulk and frown ;
Closer to their skirts you cling,
Coaxing Winter to be Spring.

Then when your sweet task is done,
And the wild-flowers, one by one,
Here, there, everywhere do blow,
Primroses, you haste to go,
Satisfied with what you bring,
Waning morning-star of spring.
You have brightened doubtful days,
You have sweetened long delays,
Fooling our enchanted reason
To miscalculate the season.
But when doubt and fear are fled,
When the kine leave wintry shed,
And 'mong grasses green and tall
Find their fodder, make their stall ;
When the wintering swallow flies
Homeward back from southern skies,
To the dear old cottage thatch
Where it loves to build and hatch,
That its young may understand,
Nor forget, this English land ;
When the cuckoo, mocking rover,
Laughs that April loves are over ;
When the hawthorn, all ablow,
Mimics the defeated snow :
Then you give one last look round,
Stir the sleepers underground,
Call the champion to awake,
Tell the speedwell courage take,
Bid the eyebright have no fear,
Whisper in the bluebell's ear
Time has come for it to flood
With its blue waves all the wood,
Mind the stitchwort of its pledge
To replace you in the hedge,
Bid the ladysmocks good-bye,
Close your bonnie lids and die ;
And, without one look of blame,
Go as gently as you came.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

From The Fortnightly Review.

LUCIUS CAREY, LORD FALKLAND.*

THERE are some lives, not necessarily in the highest ranks of history, which are constantly rewritten and discussed, and such a one is the life of Lucius Carey, Lord Falkland. It is not because he occupies in every picture of the Civil War a space disproportionate to his short career, nor again that from the days of Clarendon down to our own generation there is a striking consent of the most eminent writers to give honor to the unsullied life of the Royalist statesman, but that in the circumstances of his time many reasonable analogies and resemblances may be traced to the condition of our England of the nineteenth century. The rule of the Plantagenets, the long struggle of Yorkists and Lancastrians, the government of the Tudors, though parts of a very continuous and consistent history, seem too far off from our time to belong to us; but the principles for which Charles I. and the Long Parliament contended, prerogative and freedom of debate, control of the military forces, right of taxation, the relations of the Church to and in the State, underlie at least the political controversies of our own age, whilst they are still burning questions in some of the great monarchies and civilized countries of Europe. The gulf of time which divides us from that famous Long Parliament with which Lord Falkland's name is forever associated is little more than two hundred years wide — an interval which, long in the life of individual men, is short in that of a nation; and of all Parliaments before, and perhaps after, the Long Parliament is the most memorable in English history. From it dates, in the words of one of our historians, the "corporate life" of the two great parties in the State, from it the modern relations of the crown

and the people, from it the stately and orderly structure of English Constitutional freedom. The abdication of James II., the Toleration Act, the Bill of Rights, the Act of Settlement, the development of Parliamentary parties, and the balanced Constitution such as we have known it during the early and golden days of our Victorian age, have all flowed naturally and consistently out of the controversies and legislation of the Great Rebellion. The coming generation, bred up under different conditions of thought and education, may perhaps find it hard to sympathize to an equal degree with the feelings which animated the Royalist and Parliamentarian parties of that time. Never probably has a change been so rapid in all that constitutes the real life of men as that which has occurred within the last half-century; and the new ideas and interests and learning of our day are creating for our children an absolutely new world. Thus the interval between their age and that of the Civil War will to them probably appear a much wider one than to us who have inherited in a more continuous descent the traditions of the seventeenth century; and the House of Commons of the year 1900, if it changes character in the same rate and proportion that it has changed during the last three years of evil augury, will not have one shred or vestige of common character with the great body which met to decide the fortunes of England in November, 1640.

Of all the scenes of that time, none is more vivid, none comes more closely home to us, than the picture of the Long Parliament. We know the form and shape of the long, low, and ill-lit room in which the Commons met; we have the speeches, closely reasoned, stern in import, steeped in religious thought and phraseology; we recognize the familiar names of the great county families who yet live in the land and who then and ever since have sent up members to Parliament — Trelawneys, Edgcumbes, Bullers from Cornwall and Devon, Herberts from Wales, a Knightley from Northampton, a Deering from Kent, a Howard from Oxfordshire, a Portman from Taunton, a Cecil from Hert-

* On the 9th Sept., 1878, close by the town of Newbury, a granite memorial was unveiled in honor of Lord Falkland and the Royalist officers and men who fell fighting for King Charles I. on the 29th day of the same month, 1643, two hundred and thirty-five years before. It was my fortune on that and on a previous occasion to speak at some length on the character and career of Lord Falkland; and as I have been several times requested to republish those speeches, I have thought it well to take this opportunity of combining their chief features in a single article.

ford, a Percy from Northumberland — we know the very places in which they sat, and we can easily reproduce to ourselves the scenes of which that room was a witness. Such a one was that, when on a critical occasion the house, highly wrought by the anxieties of the time, sat for a while silent and full of thought, until the clerk at the table read out, as might be heard any day now, the details of some trifling and casual bill. Then the House, feeling the contrast of the bill with the grave surroundings of the hour, burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. Such again was the scene when Pym, then leader of the Opposition, brought into the House an anonymous letter which he had received threatening his life, and containing a rag supposed to be infected with the plague. The clerk read out the letter, but when he came to the description of the rag he dropped it on the floor and amid the cries of the members he spurned both rag and letter out of the House. Yet again another scene, when some laths in one of the galleries of the House gave a sudden crack and caused a panic, in which all the members "under the gallery in amaze leaped down, and some fell one upon another, and some ran away out of the House," and through Westminster Hall, till old Sir Robert Mansell drew his sword and made them stand like true Englishmen. "Mr. Thomas Earle broke his shin, and Sir Frederic Cornwallis had his hat dusted with lime from the broken laths, and Mr. John Hotham met some running away and asked the cause; but they not telling it and pursuing their flight, he came to the door to inquire, conceiving that there had been some division in the House concerning the deans and chapters."

These and such like are scenes which make the Long Parliament live again before us, and they are colored by little incidents which, in similar circumstances, would have been perfectly natural in the House of Commons with which our generation has been familiar. In the midst of them Lord Falkland is a central figure, and one with whom we have so much in common, that, were he now living, he might share our public anxieties, take

part in our controversies, and hold converse with us as friend and counsellor. His position was that which has been occupied by a few statesmen of our own day, who, whilst holding true to their own principles and opinions, have yet had the singular fortune to be trusted by both parties in the State, and even to find personal friends in the opposing ranks. Till the stern arbitration of the sword was actually invoked, he was in habits of more or less intimacy with many of the Parliamentary leaders; fragments of his conversation with Hampden and Cromwell remain; and such has been the influence of his character even beyond his own day that, whilst intellectually the inferior of the great writer whose pen has given him fame, he has perhaps, so far as action is concerned, stamped a deeper mark upon our public life than did Lord Clarendon. Both parties in the State have claimed, and may continue to claim, some share in his high character.

It is not, however, my purpose here to describe at any length Lord Falkland's career. His character has been portrayed by the greatest writer of his day, his own intimate friend, the English Thucydides of the seventeenth century; and modern eulogy cannot go beyond that graceful and touching description. The "prodigious parts of his learning and knowledge; his inimitable sweetness of, and delight in, conversation; his flowing and obliging humanity; his goodness to mankind and his primitive simplicity and integrity of life," delight us by the picture which they conjure up, no less than by the language in which that picture is painted for all time. The pencil of Vandyke has not done more for Charles I. and his Royalist followers than the noble periods of Clarendon have done for Lord Falkland. Whilst the commonwealth of letters stands, and polished converse casts its spell over the human mind, the recollection of Great Tew, with its varied society gathered from the University of Oxford, and the history of that free intercourse of mind and mind which preceded, as it was wholly different from, a later and somewhat ignoble patronage of literature, will have a never-dying charm. It is true

that there were some on the Parliamentary side who in a love of letters and in mental culture might challenge comparison with, and in some respects even assert a superiority to, Lord Falkland. There were gentlemen, scholars, poets amongst the opponents of the king; but none combined so many high qualities, and nowhere in the history of that stormy time does any individual character stand forth in such harmonious entirety, in such complete and blameless relief, as that of Lord Falkland. From the early opening of his life, when with characteristic unselfishness he offered to resign his whole property to a somewhat unreasonable father, down to the hour of his death, when, in the words of his friend and chronicler, "that incomparable young man fell in the four-and-thirtieth year of his age, having so much despatched the business of life that the oldest rarely attain to that immense knowledge, and the youngest enter not into the world with more innocence," he was unswervingly true to himself. Fuller, in his quaint phraseology, says that "cracks in a glass past mending are no great matter, but the least flaw in a diamond is considerable;" and with this feeling many have searched and scanned Lord Falkland's character for those little inequalities and defects which in ordinary men pass unnoticed. I do not indeed desire to represent him as a perfect character, for history knows none such. There are spots in every sun, and in Lord Falkland there were doubtless errors. He was a man of impulse, of ardent feeling, made up of conflicting sympathies, but for that reason all the more human and attractive to subsequent times. None can complain when so candid a writer as Mr. Gardiner weighs with judicial fairness the merits and shortcomings of Lord Falkland's career, even if his ultimate conclusion is less favorable than I am disposed to think it should be. But the few who with far less learning and impartiality have failed to recognize the beauty of his character, and in that carping temper, which the great German historian declares to be the basest spirit in which history can be written or studied, have only sought to discover the faults and ex-

aggerate the imperfections of Lord Falkland, are outweighed by the more generous accord of the greater masters of English literature. Parliament, a truer exponent of public feeling, has recognized the loftiness of purpose and the purity of life in the Royalist hero, when in that stately approach to its own council chambers, crowded with the statues of English statesmen and rich with historic associations, it placed the marble figure of Lord Falkland leaning on his sword in pensive mood.

It is the recognition of all this that has given Lord Falkland the place which he holds in English estimation, and through which he still has so great an attraction for us. In language worthy of his subject Mr. M. Arnold has summed up the causes of this "exalted esteem," and I cannot do better than repeat them. "He had everything," he says, "except personal beauty to qualify him for a hero to the imagination of mankind. He had rank, accomplishment, sweet temper, exquisite courtesy, liberality, magnanimity, superb courage, melancholy, misfortune, early death." A rare and touching, and yet as I believe a true picture of the man; and as we, living amid the rapid mutations of our time, dwell on such characters as his and retrace the lines of moral beauty in which they have come down to us, they sometimes seem to us truer and more enduring, because more worthy to live, than the undistinguished crowd that flits across our commonplace stage. We may say to ourselves as the old monk, who had sat for threescore years before Titian's famous picture of the "Last Supper" in the Escorial, said: "I have sat daily watching that picture till all my companions have dropped off, and yet there the figures in the picture remain. I look at them till I sometimes think that they are the realities and we but the shadows."

Anyhow, so long as human nature remains, the story of those who have lived and died nobly will never cease to influence the conduct of other men; nor are we so far removed from the age of Lord Falkland that we cannot draw some lessons from his short career. Of these

lessons there are at least four which seem worthy of note.

I. There was in him the high culture, the love of letters, the delight in the intercourse of the learned, the wise, the good—all in fact that gives social life its greatest charm. He was in this the ideal of a statesman and the very representative of an hereditary class, whose duty and defence it is by the diligent use of the greater leisure vouchsafed to them in a busy age to fit themselves for the varied duties of society and legislation. "I pardoned," says the eloquent American traveller, "high park fences when I saw that besides deer and pheasants these have preserved Arundel marbles, Townley galleries, Howard and Spencerian libraries, Warwick and Portland vases, Saxon MSS., monastic architectures. Such lords are the treasurers and librarians of mankind engaged by their pride and wealth to this position." Yet side by side with this love of all that appeals most highly to cultivated minds was the ready surrender of it by Lord Falkland at the summons of duty. Nor was it a slight or nominal sacrifice. In his house at Great Tew, that "college situated in a purer air," he had all that books and converse and accomplished society could give; Morley, Hammond, Chillingworth were his guests, Cowley and Waller in kindly verse paid tribute to the charm of his intellectual gifts, whilst the quiet happiness of home life left no room for the ambitions of the court or the distinctions of political office. For it is clear alike by dates and facts that he persisted in refusing office until he ran the risk of being thought to refuse it from the fear of responsibility; and then with the eager generosity of his nature he at once accepted its burdens and courted its perils. This was his sacrifice to the State; it was freely made; and in it he taught a practical and a not unnecessary lesson to other beside his own times, when we consider the growing irksomeness of political work in our day, and the tendency here as in America in the higher class of minds to withdraw from the turbid tide of public business into the still waters of private life. As in that day Izaak Walton betook himself to his fishing, Lord Arundel to his marbles, Evelyn to foreign travel, so there will always be men whose culture and refinement, whilst eminently fitting them for the service of the State, also turn them away from the coarse turmoil of politics.

II. Lord Falkland combined that which

in all ages has been found difficult of combination, and was especially hard in his time—an honest devotion to the crown with an equally true devotion to the State. He was worthy of his family motto, "In utroque fidelis;" he anticipated and accepted in singleness of heart the old saying that "a commonwealth and a king are no more contrary to each other than the trunk of a tree and the top bough thereof. There is a republic included in every monarchy." None within the record of our constitutional history, none even from the days of Pitt to Sir Robert Peel, has excelled, scarcely any that I can recall has equalled him, in this loyal devotion to the English Constitution. He was emphatically a statesman—a stern, ardent, almost intolerant denouncer of abuse, and yet a faithful servant of the crown; undazzled by ambition, unstained by the vices of the courtier or the so-called patriot, pursuing to the best of his lights the simple rule of duty, negligent even of consistency where consistency was wrong.

The great abuses which existed in Lord Falkland's day have long since passed away, and it is only a distorted imagination that can affect to believe that they now exist or are possible; but there will always be evils to remove and improvements to be effected in the body politic of a great nation; and the temper which moved Lord Falkland is as necessary in the days of Queen Victoria as in those of Charles I.

III. In a time of great party bitterness and unfairness we may pause to dwell upon the singular moderation and "charitableness," as Clarendon calls it, of Lord Falkland's character and conduct.

And yet it is for these very reasons that some modern writers, unable to forgive his final decision to die in the king's service, have gone so far as to deny him that quality of moderation which Hallam and Lord Macaulay have more generously accorded. Political moderation with them has assumed a new form, and is to be found rather with Cromwell and Pym than with Bedford and Hutchinson, Culpepper and Falkland. If so, we may well ask what is political moderation? It has many counterfeits and forgeries. There were Laodiceans in the apostolic age as there have been pretenders to the virtue in subsequent times. Political moderation is not uncertainty of vision, nor hesitancy of purpose, nor an oscillating between two extremes, nor even a philosophic desire to steer a middle course

between contending factions. It is rather the fair and even temper, the generous recognition of what is wise and right even in opponents, the abhorrence of injustice and abuse even in associates. It is the temper which leans to the cause beloved by Cato though unfavored by the gods. As was said at a later period of another eminent Englishman, it might, *mutatis mutandis*, be said of Lord Falkland that he was the foremost defender of liberty at the beginning of 1641, the foremost defender of order at the close of 1641; the champion of the ancient and legal Constitution of the realm against an encroaching government at one time and against a seditious Parliament and populace at another; and when at last speech gave place to action, and the paths of loyalty and disloyalty, of duty and rebellion, lay before him, he unhesitatingly made his choice. Of all men he was sensitively alive to the miseries of civil war, and the victory of neither side could have been to him an object of unqualified desire. Unlike Hampden, he is free from the slightest suspicion of having aggravated the quarrel; so long as he might he sought to reconcile the pretensions of king and Parliament; but when it was clear that the time had passed for the peaceable adjustment of the controversy, he boldly chose the least of two evils, though conscious that he was fighting under the shadow of inevitable doom. He became a partisan, but he was a partisan without forgetting that partisanship may be consistent with truth and honor. So rooted indeed was he in these principles, that when secretary of state he refused his consent to the employment of spies and the opening of letters — practices which had been invented by his predecessors as they have been accepted by his successors in office. Perhaps of all statesmen he would seem least of all to have sanctioned a distinction between public and private morality, most of all to have given form and reality to Lord Bacon's famous aphorism, "that clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature, and that mixture of falsehood, though it is like alloy in gold and silver which may make the metal work the better, yet embaseth it." Such morality may be thought to be too high for ordinary political practice; yet few will deny the beauty or the value of the example. In a period remarkable for political and statesmanlike capacity there is no character in which shine out so scrupulous a love of truth and so delicate a sense of

honor. Setting aside many names in the Royalist ranks as noble and pure as any that can be found in history, I prefer to compare him with such men as Bedford, Elliot, Hutchinson, Hampden, Milton, and I fail to see that they reach to his high level. It would of course be absurd to suggest a literary comparison of the accomplished friend of Chillingworth and Hales with the great master of English poetry, who, Puritan as he was, could sing so sweetly of storied windows and pealing organs and the entrancing magic of lofty ritual. But if in the domain of letters Lord Falkland was immeasurably inferior to one of the greatest of English poets, he was in worthiness and consistency of action as much his superior. When with unfeigned reluctance Lord Falkland left the shades of Great Tew to undertake the ungrateful duties of public life, Milton was also consenting "to lay aside his singing robes for a season and to leave a calm and pleasing solitariness to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes." But who can read his coarse and scurrilous and utterly unjust abuse of Charles I. and then turn to his almost equally vehement denunciation of the Long Parliament a few years later, and not contrast his violence and the gross inconsistencies into which that violence betrayed him, with the stately moderation of Lord Falkland, whose pen, during the literary war which ushered in the real conflict, was as blameless as his sword was afterwards?

IV. There is a time in human affairs when moderation must give place to action. It has been made an accusation against Lord Falkland that he abandoned the high ground of moderation to become a partisan; but it is rather to be counted amongst the merits of the man that he so appreciated the exigencies of the time that, regardless of consistency, regardless of the ties of personal friendship, regardless of the misfortune, failure, troubles, which he could not but foresee, he threw in his lot with the cause which he held to be right. It has been said that in his change of political attitude he made what would be called in modern phraseology a sharp curve; but the distempers and troubles of a revolutionary period necessitate sharp curves; and he who, when once convinced that government is passing out of control, and that the State is drifting away from its true moorings, hesitates to strengthen the cause of the Constitution, has neither the foresight of the statesman nor the heart of the patriot. It

is impossible, as it has been truly said, for a man to realize the fable of Mahomed's coffin and to remain forever balanced between even attractions. He may indeed oscillate like a pendulum between the two extremes, but in such a case he will "yield to both parties, be duped by both, and be despised by all." The real difficulty, however, in times like those of which I am writing is to decide where and when the turning-point presents itself. The change in Lord Falkland was undoubtedly rapid. On 11th March Lord Falkland was a consenting party to a bill directed against the judicial and legislative powers of the bishops; and it was in this debate that the famous difference of opinion between him and Mr. Hyde threatened for a moment to divide the friendship of years. On the 23rd October, six months later, when a similar bill was again brought forward, Lord Falkland was found with Mr. Hyde in strong opposition to the measure. This change of opinion has been often commented on, but the reasons are not far to seek. They were in part explained at the time. When Mr. Hampden remarked upon the change, it drew from Lord Falkland the severe retort, that "he had formerly been persuaded by that worthy gentleman to believe many things, which he had since found to be untrue, and therefore he had changed his opinion in many particulars as well as to things and persons."

But there was another and obvious reason in the course of public events. Much had happened since the 3rd November, 1640, when the Long Parliament had met; and again much between the 11th March and the 23rd October, 1641: the balance of constitutional power had shifted, the party of defence had become the party of attack, Parliamentary privilege had evidently gained the upper hand of royal prerogative; ship money had been pronounced illegal; the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission had ceased to exist; and whilst the ancient institutions of the realm were trembling to their fall, Pym and the leaders of the Opposition were with an unscrupulous ability forcing on the great duel between king and Parliament. Lord Falkland, on the other hand, and those who agreed with him, in the words of a modern historian by no means favorable to the royal cause, "clung to the law, but the law had been vindicated; they bitterly resented the system of Strafford and of Laud, but the system was at an end; they believed that

English freedom hung on the assembling of Parliament, and on the loyal co-operation of the crown with the great council of the realm, but the assembling of Parliaments was now secured by the Triennial Bill, and the king professed himself ready to rule according to the counsels of Parliament."

Dr. Arnold himself admits that we must distinguish very widely between the "anti-popular" party in 1640, before the Long Parliament met, and the same party a few years or even months afterwards. The time had come, as sooner or later it comes in all revolutions, when the choice of parties, however painful, has to be made, when the greater peril absorbs all minor considerations, and the safety of fundamental institutions becomes the supreme object. Happy and worthy of all praise are they who, like Lord Falkland, have the clear vision and the strong judgment to cast in their lot with the cause of right and order, and not, like the frothy rhetoricians of the French Revolution, to be dragged on step by step to that fatal point where advance and retreat are alike hopeless.

It is impossible to take leave of Lord Falkland without considering how far he affected, how far he was affected by, the age in which he lived. In the seventeenth century moderation was not the virtue of statesmen any more than charity was that of theologians. In England men were very much in earnest, whilst abroad the earnestness often became savagery. There were gallant gentlemen who could say, like Sir Edmund Verney: "For my part I do not like the quarrel, and do heartily wish that the king would yield and consent to what they desire; so that my conscience is only concerned in honor and in gratitude to follow my master. I have eaten his bread, and served him near thirty years, and will not do so base a thing as to forsake him, and choose rather to lose my life (which I am sure I shall do) to preserve and defend those things which are against my conscience to preserve and defend." There were noble spirits who, when dying on the battle-field and asked to prefer some petition to the king, could reply, "I have no prayer now but to the King of kings."

These it is true were Royalists, and imbued with the best spirit of Royalist chivalry; but there were also on the other side men like Colonel Hutchinson, "who never disdained the meanest person nor flattered the greatest, and whose whole life was the rule of temperance in meat, drink,

apparel, pleasure, and all those things that may be lawfully enjoyed." There were courteous and high-minded gentlemen who could write as Waller wrote to his old friend and companion: "My affections to you are so unchangeable that hostility itself cannot violate my friendship to your person, but I must be true to the cause wherein I serve. The God of peace in his good time send us peace, and in the mean time fit us to receive it. We are both on the stage, and we must act the parts that are assigned us in this tragedy. Let us do it in a way of honor, and without personal animosities." But these were the few—the very few on the Parliamentary side; and the young soldier who died at Marston Moor with the one single regret on his lips that he had not lived longer to smite more of the Lord's enemies was a truer representation of the higher feeling in that party. It would therefore be too much to suppose that Lord Falkland impressed his own moderate temper on the civil war; but it may certainly be said that the spirit of that moderation which existed in him, and more or less in many other Englishmen, was reflected in the war. Neither then nor since, with perhaps the exception of the American War of Secession, can any civil strife be in this respect compared with the Great Rebellion. The Wars of the Roses in England, the Wars of the League in France, the religious war of the Palatinate, and a few years afterwards those massacres in the valleys of Piedmont which kindled the genius of Milton into verse of eternal indignation and pathos—none of these will bear comparison with our Great Rebellion. During the course of that struggle the old life of town and country in most places went on as before, old forms were adhered to, old traditions maintained, even the operations of trade by the agreement of both parties were allowed to go free; nor, if we except Ireland, where it was a war of races rather than of parties, can we readily call to mind on either side cases of very gross or detestable outrage. Even at the close of the war, during the Protectorate, though there was injustice and harshness and sequestration of property, the ancient landmarks of the Constitution stood out above the waters, and John Lilburne's trial in 1649 is an illustration how little the old forms of justice had changed. The Great Rebellion preceded the French Revolution, with which it has often been compared, by nearly a century and a half, but how different was

it in its objects, its aspects, its whole course! The French Revolution was, after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, a carnival of devils, in which the fear of God and the well-being of society was trampled under foot, till its loathsome existence was put an end to by the military power of the first Napoleon. The Great Rebellion was, on the contrary, a war of principles, in which both parties were under the influence of strong religious feelings, in which they both conscientiously believed that they had right on their side, and fought out their differences in a fair and manly spirit. English society was in truth so sound that not even the distractions of civil war disturbed its ancient tenor. The more that its history is studied the more will the judgment of Mr. Hallam be confirmed, that, setting aside the ruffians and fanatics on either side, the swash-bucklers and the hypocrites, the "roystering cavaliers" and the "preaching colonels," there were men not very widely separated in conscience and opinion who voted in the opposite Parliaments of Oxford and Westminster, and who fought in opposite ranks at Edgehill and Newbury. "We cannot believe that Falkland and Culpeper differed greatly in their constitutional principles from Whitelock and Pierpont, or that Hertford and Southampton were less friends to a limited monarchy than Essex and Northumberland;" and, "as I know," continues that just and candid historian, "how little there was on one side [the Parliamentary] of such liberty as a wise man would hold dear, so I am not yet convinced, that the great body of the Royalists, the peers and gentry of England, were combating for the sake of tyranny." From those men, of whom Lord Falkland was a representative and type, dates the commencement of England's modern history; from them the reforms which in substance if not in name we still enjoy; from their time come down the precedents that guide us, the principles that underlie our political controversies, and, broadening as it comes, the great volume of English constitutional freedom. Almost alone of the nations of Europe we retain some traces of that old society which, changed as it is, once covered the face of the Continent. We have removed from it all that was hard and unjust, we have insensibly moulded it to the altered requirements of our new world, but we retain its outline, and in that outline we can trace our lineal descent from the historic England of other days. In

our abundant prosperity, our equal laws, our friendly union of classes, our temperate monarchy we have, after making due allowance for the imperfections of all human institutions, a picture of which our ancestors never dreamed as possible even in the pages of their fondest Utopias. May it never be said of us as it was once written of a former generation: "They planted a fair garden and then invited a wild boar to refresh himself under the shade of the fruit-trees; and their guest, being something rude, hath disordered their paradise and made it to become a wilderness."

CARNARVON.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

THE LADIES LINDORES.

CHAPTER XXV.

JOHN ERSKINE was on the steps leading to the great central entrance when the carriage from Lindores drove up at the door. It was not by chance that he found himself there, for he was aware of the intended visit; and with the sombre attraction which the sight of a rival and an adversary has for a man, felt himself drawn towards the scene in which an act of this drama in which his happiness was involved, was going on. He hurried down before the footman to get to the carriage-door, and hand the ladies out. He had seen them several times since that day when Lady Lindores, unused to deception, had allowed the secret to slip from her. And he had accustomed himself to the fact that Millefleurs, who was in person and aspect so little alarming, but in other ways the most irresistible of rivals, was in full possession of the field before him. But John, with quickened insight, had also perceived that no decisive step had as yet been taken, and with infinite relief was able to persuade himself that Edith as yet was no party to the plot, and was unaware what was coming. He saw in a moment now that some important change had come over the state of affairs. Lady Lindores avoided his eye, but Edith looked at him, he thought, with a sort of appeal in her face, — a question, — a wondering demand, full of mingled defiance and deprecation. So much in one look! — and yet there seemed to him even more than all this. What had happened? Millefleurs was conscious too. There was a self-satisfaction about him more evident, more marked than usual. He put out his chest a little more. He held his

head higher, though he refrained from any special demonstration in respect to Edith. There was an air about him as of a man who had taken some remarkable initiative. His very step touched the ground with more weight: his round eyes contemplated all things with a more bland and genial certainty of being able to solve every difficulty. And Rintoul had a watchful look as of a man on his guard — a keen spectator vigilantly attentive to everything; uncertain whether even yet he might not be called upon to interfere. All this John Erskine saw at one glance, — not clearly as it is set down here, but vaguely, with confused perceptions which he could not disentangle, which conveyed no distinct information to his mind, but only a warning, an intimation which set every vein of him tingling. Lady Lindores would not meet his eye; but Edith looked at him with that strange look of question — How much do you know? it seemed to say. What do you suspect? and with a flash of indignation — Do you suspect me? Do you doubt me? He thought there was all this, or something like it, in her eyes; and yet he could not tell what they meant, nor, so far as she was concerned, what length her knowledge went. He met her look with one in which another question bore the chief part. But it was much less clear to Edith what that question meant. They were all as conscious as it was possible for human creatures each shut up within the curious envelope of his own identity, imperfectly comprehending any other, to be. The air tingled with meaning round them. They were all aware, strangely, yet naturally, of standing on the edge of fate.

Lady Caroline and her husband received this party in the great drawing-room which was used on state occasions: everything had been thrown open professedly that Lord Millefleurs should see, but really that Lord Millefleurs should be dazzled by, the splendor which Torrance devoutly believed to be unrivalled. It was in order that he might see the effect of all the velvet and brocade, all the gilding and carving, upon the stranger, that he had waited to receive the party from Lindores with his wife, a thing quite unusual to him; and he was in high expectation and good-humor, fully expecting to be flattered and gratified. There was a short pause of mutual civilities to begin with, during which Torrance was somewhat chilled and affronted to see that the little marquis remained composed, and displayed no awe, though he looked

about him with his quick little round eyes.

"You will have heard, Lady Caroline, how I have lost any little scrap of reputation I ever had," Millefleurs said, clasp- ing his plump hands. "I am no shot: it is true, though I ought to be ashamed to acknowledge it. And I don't care to fol- low flying things on foot. If there was a balloon indeed! I am an impostor at this season. I am occupying the place of some happy person who might make a large bag every day."

"But there is room for all those happy persons without disturbing you—who have other qualities," said Carry, with her soft pathetic smile. There was a little tremor about her, and catching of her breath, for she did not know at what mo- ment might occur that name which al- ways agitated her, however she might fortify herself against it.

"If not at Lindores, there's always plenty of room at Tinto," said Torrance, with ostentatious openness. "There's room for a regiment here. I have a few fellows coming for the partridges, but not half enough to fill the house. Whenever you like, you and your belongings, as many as you please, whether it's servants—or guardians," Torrance said, with his usual rude laugh.

Something like an electric shock ran round the company. Millefleurs was the only one who received it without the smallest evidence of understanding what it was. He looked up in Torrance's face with an unmoved aspect. "I don't travel with a suite," he said, "though I am much obliged to you all the same. It is my father who carries all sorts of people about with him. And I love my present quarters," said the little marquis, direct- ing a look towards Lady Lindores of ab- solute devotion. "I will not go away un- less I am sent away. A man who has knocked about the world knows when he is well off. I will go to Erskine, and be out of the way during the hours when I am *de trop*."

"Erskine is filling his house too, I sup- pose," Torrance said. And then having got all that was practicable in the shape of offence out of this subject, he proposed that they should make the tour of what had been always called the state apart- ments at Tinto. "There's a few things to show," he said, affecting humility; "not much to you who have been about the world as you say, but still a few things that we think something of in this out-of- the-way place." Then he added, "Lady

Car had better be the showman, for she knows more about them than I do— though I was born among them." This was the highest possible pleasure to Pat Torrance. To show off his possessions, to which he professed to be indifferent, with an intended superiority in his rude man- liness to anything so finicking, by means of his wife—his proudest and finest pos- session of all—was delightful to him. He lounged after them, keeping close to the party, ready with all his being to en- joy Lady Car's description of the things that merited admiration. He was in high good-humor, elated with the sense of his position as her husband and the owner of all this grandeur. He felt that the little English lord would now see what a Scotch country gentleman could be, what a noble distinguished wife he could get for himself, and what a house he could bring her to. Unfortunately, Lord Millefleurs, whose delight was to talk about California miners and their habitudes, was familiar with greater houses than Tinto, and had been born in the purple, and slept on rose- leaves all his life. He admired politely what he was evidently expected to ad- mire, but he gave vent to no enthusiasm. When they came to the great dining-room, with its huge vases and marble pillars, he looked round upon it with a countenance of complete seriousness, not lightened by any gratification. "Yes—I see: every- thing is admirably in keeping," he said; "an excellent example of the period. It is so seldom one sees this sort of thing nowadays. Everybody has begun to try to improve, don't you know; and the *mieux* is always the *ennemi du bien*. This is all of a piece, don't you know. It is quite perfect of its kind."

"What does the little beggar mean?" it was now Torrance's turn to say to him- self. It sounded, no doubt, like praise, but his watchful suspicion and jealousy were roused. He tried his usual expedi- ent of announcing how much it had cost; but Millefleurs—confound the little beg- gar!—received the intimation with per- fect equanimity. He was not impressed. He made Torrance a little bow, and said with his lisp, "Yeth, very cohtly alwayth—the materials are all so expensive, don't you know." But he could not be brought to say anything more. Even Lady Caro- line felt depressed by his gravity; for in- sensibly, though she ought to have known better, she had got to feel that all the wealth of Tinto—its marbles, its gilding, its masses of ornate plate, and heavy decorations—must merit consideration.

They had been reckoned among the things for which she had been sacrificed — they were part of her price, so to speak; and if they were not splendid and awe-inspiring, then her sacrifice had indeed been made in vain. Poor Lady Caroline was not in a condition to meet with any further discouragement; and to feel that her husband was beginning to lose his air of elated good-humor, gave an additional tremor to the nervousness which possessed her. She knew what he would say about "your fine friends," and how he would swear that no such visitors should ever be asked to his house again. She went on mechanically saying her little lesson by heart, pointing out all the great pieces of modern Sèvres and Dresden. Her mind was full of miserable thoughts. She wanted to catch John Erskine's eye, to put an imploring question to him with eyes or mouth. "Is he coming?" This was what she wanted to say. But she could not catch John Erskine's eye, who was gloomily walking behind her by the side of Edith saying nothing. Lady Caroline could not help remarking that neither of these two said a word. Lady Lindores and Rintoul kept up a kind of skirmishing action around them, trying now to draw one, now the other, into conversation, and get them apart. But the two kept by each other like a pair in a procession — yet never spoke.

"The period, dear lady?" said Millefleurs, "I am not up to the last novelties of classification, nor scientific, don't you know; but I should say Georgian, late Georgian, or verging upon the times of the Royal William" — he gave a slight shiver as he spoke, perhaps from cold, for the windows were all open, and there was a draught. "But perfect of its kind," he added with a little bow, and a seriousness which was more disparaging than abuse. Even Lady Carry smiled constrainedly, and Torrance, with a start, awoke to his sense of wrong, and felt that he could bear no more.

"George or Jack," he cried, "I don't know anything about periods; this I do know, that it ran away with a great deal of money — money none of us would mind having in our pockets now." He stared at Rintoul as he spoke, but even Rintoul looked as if he were indifferent, which galled the rich man more and more. "My Lady Countess and my Lord Marquis," he said, with an elaborate mocking bow, "I'll have to ask you to excuse me. I've got — something to do that I thought I could get off — but I can't, don't you

know;" and here he laughed again, imitating as well as he was able the seraphic appeal to the candor of his hearers, which Millefleurs was so fond of making. The tone, the words, the aspect of the man, taught Millefleurs sufficiently (who was the only stranger) that he had given offence; and the others drew closer, eager to make peace for Carry's sake, who was smiling with the ordinary effort of an unhappy wife to make the best of it, and represent to the others that it was only her husband's "way."

But Torrance's ill-humor was not as usual directed towards his wife. When he looked at her, his face, to her great astonishment, softened. It was a small matter that did it; the chief reason was that he saw a look of displeasure — of almost offence — upon his wife's countenance too. She was annoyed with the contemptible little English lord as much as he was. This did not take away his rage, but it immediately gave him that sense that his wife was on his side, for which the rough fellow had always longed — and altered his aspect at once. As he stood looking at them, with his large, light eyes projecting from their sockets, a flush of offence on his cheeks, a forced laugh on his mouth, his face softened all in a moment. This time she was no longer the chief antagonist to be subdued, but his natural supporter and champion. He laid his heavy hand upon her shoulder, with a pride of proprietorship which for once she did not seem to contest. "Lady Car," he said, "she's my deputy; she'll take care of you better than I."

Lady Caroline, with an involuntary, almost affectionate response, put her hand on his arm. "Don't go," she said, lifting her face to him with an eloquence of suppressed and tremulous emotion all about her, which indeed had little reference to this ill-humor of his, but helped to dignify it, and take away the air of trivial rage and mortification which had been too evident at first. Lady Lindores, too, made a step forward with the same intention. He stood and looked at them with a curious medley of feeling, touched at once by the pleasure of a closer approach to his wife, and by a momentary tragic sense of being entirely outside of this group of people to whom he was so closely related. They were his nearest connections, and yet he did not belong to them, never could belong to them! They were of a different species — another world altogether. Lady Car could take care of them. She could understand them, and know their ways;

but not he. They were all too fine for him, out of his range, thinking different thoughts, pretending even (for it must surely have been mere pretence) to despise his house, which everybody knew was the great house of the district, infinitely grander than the castle or any other place in the county. He was deeply wounded by this unlooked-for cutting away of the ground from under his feet; but Lady Car was on his side. She could manage them though he could not. Not one of them was equal to her, and it was to him that she belonged. He laughed again, but the sound of his laugh was not harsh as it had been before. "No, no; Lady Car will take care of you," he said.

"I hope," said Millefeurs in his mellifluous tones, "that it is not this intrusion of ours that is sending Mr. Torrance away. I know what a nuisance people are coming to luncheon in the middle of an occupied day. Send us away, Lady Caroline, or rather send me away, who am the stranger. Erskine will take me with him to Dalrulzian, and another day I shall return and see the rest of your splendors."

"Mr. Torrance has really business," said Carry; "mamma will show you the other rooms, while I speak to my husband." She went swiftly, softly, after him, as his big figure disappeared in the long vista of the great dining-room. After a moment's pause of embarrassment, the rest went on. Carry hurried trembling after her tyrant. When they were out of hearing she called him anxiously. "Oh, don't go, Pat. How do you think I can entertain such a party when they know that you are offended, and will not stay?"

"You will get on better without me," he said. "I can't stand these fellows and their airs. It isn't any fault of yours, Lady Car. Come, I'm pleased with *you*. You've stood by your own this time, I will say that for you. But they're your kind, they're not mine. Dash the little beggar, what a cheek he has! I'm not used to hear the house run down. But never mind, I don't care a pin,—and it's not your fault this time, Car," he said, with a laugh, touching her cheek with his finger with a touch which was half a blow and half a caress. This was about as much tenderness as he was capable of showing. Carry followed him to the door, and saw him plunge down the great steps, and turn in the direction of the stables. Perhaps she was not sorry to avoid all further occasion of offence. She returned slowly through the long, vulgar, costly rooms—a sigh of relief came from

her overladen heart; but relief in one point made her but more painfully conscious of another. In the distance Millefeurs was examining closely all the ornolu and finery. As she came in sight of the party, walking slowly like the worn creature she was, feeling as if all the chances of life were over for her, and she herself incomparably older, more weary and exhausted than any of them, and her existence a worn-out thing apart from the brighter current of every day, there remained in her but one flicker of personal anxiety, one terror which yet could make everything more bitter. The group was much the same as when she left them,—Lady Lindores with Millefeurs, Edith and John silent behind them, Rintoul in a sort of general spectatorship, keeping watch upon the party. Carry touched John Erskine's arm furtively and gave him an entreating look. He turned round to her alarmed.

"Lady Caroline! can I do anything? What is it?" he said.

She drew him back into a corner of the great room with its marble pillars. She was so breathless that she could hardly speak. "It is nothing—it is only—a question. Are you expecting—people—at Dalrulzian?"

Carry's soft eyes had expanded to twice their size, and looked at him out of two caves of anxiety and hollow paleness. She gave him her hand unawares, as if asking him by that touch more than words could say. John was moved to the heart.

"I think not—I hope not—I have no answer. No, no, there will be no one," he said.

She sank down into a chair, with a faint smile. "You will think me foolish—so very foolish—it is nothing to me. But—I am always so frightened," said poor Carry, with the first pretence that occurred to her, "when there is any dispeace."

"There will be no dispeace," said John, "in any case. But I am sure—I can be certain—there will be no one there."

She smiled upon him again, and waved her hand to him to leave her. "I will follow you directly," she said.

What emotions there were in this little group! Carry sat with her hand upon her heart, which fluttered still, getting back her breath. Every remission of active pain seems a positive good. She sat still, feeling the relief and ease flow over her like a stream of healing to her very feet. She would be saved the one encounter which she could not bear; and then for

the moment *he* was absent, and there would be no struggle to keep him in good-humor, or to conceal from others his readiness to offend and take offence. Was this all the semblance of happiness that remained for Carry? For the moment she was satisfied with it, and took breath, and recovered a little courage, and was thankful in that deprivation of all things—thankful that no positive pain was to be added to make everything worse; and that a brief breathing-time was hers for the moment, an hour of rest.

Edith looked at John as he came back. She had lingered, half waiting for him, just as if he had been her partner in a procession. In that moment of separation Rintoul allowed himself to go off guard. She looked at John, and almost for the first time spoke. "Carry has been talking to you," she said hastily, in an undertone.

"Yes,—about visitors—people who might be coming to stay with me."

"Is any one coming to stay with you?" she asked quickly.

"Nobody," John replied with fervor; "nor shall at any risk."

This all passed in a moment while Rintoul was off guard. She looked at him again, wistfully, gratefully, and he being excited by his own feelings, and by sympathy with all this excitement which breathed around him in so many currents, was carried beyond all prudence, beyond all intention. "I will do anything," he said, "to please you, and serve her, you know. It is nothing to offer. I am nobody in comparison with others; but what I have is all yours, and at your service,—the little that it is —"

"Oh," said Edith, in a mere breath of rapid, almost inaudible, response, "it is too much; it is too much." She did not know what she said.

"Nothing is too much. I am not asking any return. I am not presumptuous; but I am free to give. Nobody can stop me from doing that," said John, not much more clearly. It was all over in a moment. The people within a few yards of them scarcely knew they had exchanged a word; even Rintoul did not suspect any communication that was worth preventing. And next moment they separated. John, panting and breathless, as if he had been running a race, went up to where Millefleurs was discoursing upon some bit of upholstery, and stood by in the shelter of this discussion to let himself cool down. Edith kept behind in the shelter of her mother. And just then

Carry came softly out of the door of the great dining-room from behind the marble pillars, having recovered herself, and called back the smile to her face. In the midst of all these emotions, Millefleurs talked smoothly on.

"My people," he said, "have a place down in Flintshire that is a little like this, but not so perfect. My grandfather, or whoever it was, lost confidence before it was done, and mixed it up. But here, don't you know, the confidence has been sublime; no doubt has been allowed to intrude. They say that in Scotland you are so absolute—all or nothing, don't you know. Whether in furniture or anything else, how fine that is!" said the little marquis, turning up his palms. He looked quite absorbed in his subject, and as calm as a man in gingerbread. Nevertheless, he was the only person to notice that slight passage of conversation *sotto voce*, and the breathless condition in which John reached him. What had he been doing to put him out of breath?

When the house had been inspected, the party went to luncheon—a very sumptuous meal, which was prepared in the great dining-room, and was far too splendid for an ordinary family party such as this was. John, whose excitement had rather increased than diminished, and who felt that he had altogether committed himself, without chance or hope of any improved relations, was not able to subdue himself to the point of sitting down at table. He took his leave in spite of the protests of the party. His heart was beating loudly, his pulses all clanging in his ears like a steam-engine. He did not get the chance even of a glance from Edith, who said good-bye to him in a tremulous voice, and did not look up. He saw her placed by the side of Millefleurs at table, as he turned away. He had all the modesty of genuine feeling,—a modesty which is sometimes another name for despair. Why should she take any notice of him? He had no right to aspire so high. Nothing to give, as he said, except as a mere offering—a flower laid at her feet,—not a gift which was capable of a return. He said to himself that, so far as this went, there should be no deception in his mind. He would give his gift—it was his pleasure to give it—lavishly, with prodigal abundance; as a prince should give, expecting no return. In this he would have the better of all of them, he said to himself, as he went through the great house, where, except in the centre of present entertainment, all

was silent like a deserted place. He would give more liberally, more magnificently, than any duke or duke's son, for he would give all, and look for nothing in return. The feeling which accompanied this *élan* of entire self-devotion and abandonment of selfish hope gave him something of the same calm of exhaustion which was in Carry's soul. He seemed to have come to something final, something from which there was no recovery. He could not sit down at table with them; but he could not go away any more than he could stay. He went out through the vacant hall, where nobody took any notice of his going or coming, and emerged upon the wide opening of the plateau, sheltered by fir-trees, upon which the house stood dominating the landscape. His was the only shadow that crossed the sunshine in front of the huge mass of building which was so noiseless outside, so full of life and emotion within. He could not go away any more than he could stay. He wandered to the fringe of trees which clothed the edge of the steep cliff above the river, and sat there on the bank gazing down on the depths below, till the sound of voices warned him that the party was moving from the dining-room. Then he hastened away to avoid them, taking the less frequented road which led by the Scaur. He had passed that dangerous spot, but the way was still narrow between the bushes, when he heard the hoofs of Torrance's great black horse resounding upon the path. Pat was returning home after what had evidently been a wild gallop, for the powerful animal had his black coat flecked with foam, and was chewing the bit in his mouth. Torrance had almost passed without perceiving John, but catching a glimpse of him as he pushed along, suddenly drew up, making his horse rear and start. He had an air of heat and suppressed passion which corresponded with the foam and dishevelled looks of the horse. "Hollo!" he cried, "you, Erskine, have they broken up?" and sat swaying his great bulk with the impatient movements of the fagged yet fiery beast. John answered briefly, and was about to pass on, when Torrance gave him what was intended to be a playful poke with the end of his whip. "When's your visitor coming?" he said, with his harsh laugh.

"My visitor! I expect no visitor," said John, stepping back with anger which he could scarcely restrain. It was all he could do not to seize the whip, and snatch it out of the other's hand. But neither

the narrow path, nor the excited state in which both men were, was safe for any scuffle. John restrained himself with an effort.

"Oh yes, you are!" cried Torrance; "you let it out once, you know—you can't take in me. But I'm the last man in the world to find fault. Let him come! We'll have him up to Tinto, and make much of him. I told you so before."

"You seem to know my arrangements better than I know them myself," John said, white with suppressed fury. "I have no visitor coming. Permit me to know my own affairs."

"Ah! so you've forbidden him to come! Let me tell you, Mr. Erskine, that that's the greatest insult of all. Why shouldn't he come? he, or any fellow? Do you think I'm afraid of Lady Car?" and here his laugh rang into all the echoes. "Not a bit; I think more of her than that. You're putting a slight on her when you ask any man not to come. Do you hear?"

"I hear perfectly, and would hear if you spoke lower. There's enough of this, Torrance. I suppose it's your way, and you don't intend to be specially objectionable—but I am not going to be questioned so, nor will I take the lie from any man," cried John, with rising passion. There was scarcely room for him to stand in safety from the horse's hoofs, and he was compelled to draw back among the bushes as the great brute pranced and capered.

"What! will you fight?" cried Torrance, with another laugh; "that's all exploded nowadays—that's a business for *Punch*. Not that I mind: any way you please. Look here! here's a fist that would soon master you. But it's a joke, you know, nowadays; a joke for *Punch*."

"So much the worse," cried John hotly. "It was the only way of keeping in order a big bully like you."

"Oh, that's what you call me! If there was any one to see fair play—to you (for I'm twice your size) I'd let Blackie go, and give you your fill of that."

John grasped instinctively at the bridle of the big black horse, which seemed charging down upon him; and for a moment the two men gazed at each other, over the tossing, foam-flecked head, big eyeballs, and churning mouth. Then John let go the bridle at which he had caught, with an exclamation of scorn.

"Another time for that, if that is what you want," he said.

"No," cried the other, looking back, as the horse darted past,— "no, that's not

what I want; you're an honest fellow — you shall say what you please. We'll shake hands —” The horse carrying him off lost the rest of the words in the clang of jingling reins and half-maddened hoofs.

John went on very rapidly, excited beyond measure by the encounter. His face was flushed and hot; his hat, which had been knocked off his head, was stained with the damp red soil. He had torn his sleeve in the clutch he had made at the bridle. He dashed along the narrow road at a wild pace to calm himself down by rapid movement. A little way down he encountered a keeper crossing the road, who disappeared into the woods after a curious glance at his excited looks and torn coat. Further on, as he came out of the gate, he met, to his great astonishment, old Rolls, plodding along towards Tinto in company with another man, who met him at the gate. “Bless me, sir! what's the matter? Ye cannot walk the highroad like that!” was the first exclamation of old Rolls.

“Like what? Oh, my sleeve! I tore it just now on a — on a — catching a runaway horse. The brute was wild, I thought he would have had me down.” There was nothing in this that was absolutely untrue, at least nothing that it was not permissible to say in the circumstances, but the explanation was elaborate, as John felt. “And what are you doing here?” he said peremptorily. “What do you want at Tinto?” It seemed almost a personal offence to him to find Rolls there.

“I have something to say to Tinto, sir, with all respect. My father was a tenant of his father — a small tenant, not to call a farmer, something between that and a cotter — and I'm wanting to speak a good word for my brother-in-law, John Tamson, that you will maybe mind.”

Upon this the man by Rolls's side, who had been inspecting John curiously, at last persuaded himself to touch, not to take off, his hat, and to say: “Ay, sir, I'm John Tamson. I was the first to see ye the day ye cam' first to Dalrulzian. I hae my wife over by, that's good at her needle. Maybe ye'll step in and she'll shue your coat-sleeve for you. You canna gang like that all the gate to Dalrulzian. There's no saying who ye may meet.”

John Erskine had not been awakened before to the strangeness of his appearance. He looked down upon his torn coat with a vague alarm. It was a start of the black horse while he held its bridle

which had torn the sleeve out of its socket. While he was looking at this, with a disturbed air, the lodge-gates were thrown open and the Lindores's carriage came through. Lady Lindores waved her hand to him, then bent forward to look at him with sudden surprise and alarm; but the horses were fresh, and swept along, carrying the party out of sight. Millefeurs was alone with the ladies in the carriage — that John noticed without knowing why.

A minute after, accepting John Tamson's offer of service, he went over with him to his cottage, where the wife immediately got her needle and thread, with much lamentation over the gentleman's “gude black coat.” “Bless me, sir! it must have been an ill-willy beast that made ye give your arm a skreed like that,” she said: and John felt that his hand was unsteady and his nerves quivering. After all, it was no such great matter. He could not understand how it was that he had been agitated to such an extent by an encounter so slight.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OLD Rolls went up the road which led by the Scaur. It was shorter than the formal avenue, and less in the way of more important visitors. He was much distressed and “exercised in his mind” about the agitated appearance of his master — his torn sleeve, and clothes stained with the soil. He pondered much on the sight as he walked up the road. John was not a man given to quarrelling, but he would seem to have been engaged in some conflict or other. “A runaway horse! where would he get a runaway horse at Tinto?” Rolls said to himself; “and Tinto was a man very likely to provoke a quarrel.” He hurried on, feeling that he was sure to hear all about it, and much concerned at the thought that any one belonging to himself should bring discredit on the house in this way. But whether it was an excited fancy, or if there was some echo in the air of what had passed before, it seemed to Rolls that he heard, as he proceeded onwards, the sound of voices and conflict. “Will he have been but one among many?” he said within himself. “Will they be quarrelling on? — and me an unprotected man?” he added, with a prudent thought of his own welfare. Then Rolls heard a wonderful concussion in the air — he could not tell what, and then a solemn stillness. What was the meaning of this? It could have nothing to do with John.

He turned up the narrow road down which John Erskine had once driven his dog-cart, and which Torrance continually rode up and down. When he came to the opening of the Scaur, and saw the daylight breaking clear from the shadow of the over-reaching boughs, Rolls stood still for a moment with consternation. Broken branches, leaves strewn about, the print of the horse's hoofs all round the open space as if he had been rearing wildly, showed marks of a recent struggle, — he thought of his master, and his heart sank. But it was some time before his fears went any further. Where had the other party to the struggle gone? Just then he thought he heard a sound, something like a moan in the depths below. A terrible fear seized the old man. He rushed to the edge of the cliff, and gazed over with distracted looks. And then he gave utterance to a cry that rang through the woods: "Wha's that lying down there?" he cried. Something lay in a mass at the bottom of the high bank, red and rough, which descended to the water's edge — something, he could scarcely tell what, all heaped together and motionless. Rolls had opened his mouth to shout for help with the natural impulse of his horror and alarm, but another thought struck him at the moment, and kept him silent. Was it his master's doing? With a gasp of misery, he felt that it must be so; and kneeling down distracted on the edge of the Scaur, catching at the roots of the trees to support himself, he craned over to see what it was, who it was, and whether he could do anything for the sufferer, short of calling all the world to witness this terrible sight. But the one exclamation Rolls gave seemed to thrill the woods. He felt a hand touch him as he bent over the edge, and nearly lost his precarious footing in his terror. "Is't you, sir, come to look at your handiwork?" he said, solemnly turning upon the person whom he supposed to be his master. But it was not his master. It was Lord Rintoul, as pale as death, and trembling. "What — what is it?" he asked, scarcely able to articulate, pointing vaguely below, but averting his eyes as from a sight he dared not look at. Divided between the desire of getting help and of sparing his master, Rolls drew back from the Scaur and returned to his habitual caution. "I canna tell you what it is, my lord," he said; "it's somebody that has fallen over the Scaur, for all that I can see. But how that came about is mair than I can tell. We maun rouse the

place," said the old man, "and get help — if help will do any good."

"Help will do no good now," cried Rintoul in his excitement. "Nobody could fall from that height and live. Does he move? — look — or the horse?" His tongue, too, was parched, and clung to the roof of his mouth.

"The horse! then your lordship kens wha it is? Lord in heaven preserve us! no' Tinto himsel'?"

Rintoul's dry lips formed words two or three times before they were audible. "No one — no one but he — ever rides here."

And then the two stood for a horrible moment and looked at each other. Rintoul was entirely unmanned. He seemed to quiver from head to foot; his hat was off, his countenance without a tinge of color. "I have never," he said, "seen — such an accident before —"

"Did ye see it?" Rolls cried anxiously; and then the young man faltered and hesitated.

"Heard it. I — meant to say — I heard the horse rearing — and then the fall —"

He looked intently at the old man with his haggard eyes as if to ask — what? Poor old Rolls was trembling too. He thought only of his young master — so kind, so blameless, — was his life to be thus associated with crime?

"We must go and get help, my lord," said Rolls, with a heavy sigh. "However it happened, that must be our duty. No doubt ye'll have to give a true account of all ye've seen and all ye've heard. But in the mean time we must cry for help, let them suffer that may."

While this scene was proceeding so near her, Carry, upon the other side of the great house, had retired to her room in the weariness that followed her effort to look cheerful and do the honors of her table. She had made that effort very bravely, and though it did not even conceal from Millefleurs the position of affairs, still less deceive her own family, yet at least it kept up the appearance of decorum necessary, and made it easier for the guests to go through their part. The meal, indeed, was cheerful enough; it was far too magnificent, Torrance having insisted, in spite of his wife's better taste, on heaping "all the luxuries of the season" upon the table at which a duke's son was to sit. The absence of the host was a relief to all parties; but still it required an effort on the side of Carry to overcome

the effect of the empty chair in front of her, which gave a sense of incongruity to all the grandeur. And this effort cost her a great deal. She had gone into her room to rest, and lay on a sofa very quiet in the stillness of exhaustion, not doing anything, not saying anything, looking wistfully at the blue sky that was visible through the window, with the soft foliage of some birch-trees waving lightly over it — and trying not to think. Indeed, she was so weary that it was scarcely necessary to try. And what was there to think about? Nothing could be done to deliver her — nothing that she was aware of even to mend her position. She was grateful to God that she was to be spared the still greater mystery of seeing Beaufort, but that was all. Even heaven itself seemed to have no help for Carry. If she could have been made by some force of unknown agency to love her husband, she would still have been an unhappy wife; but it is to be feared, poor soul, that things had come to this pass with her, that she did not even wish to love her husband, and felt it less degrading to live with him under compulsion, than to be brought down to the level of his coarser nature, and take pleasure in the chains she wore. Her heart revolted at him more and more. In such a terrible case, what help was there for her in earth or heaven? Even had he been reformed — had he been made a better man — Carry would not have loved him: she shrank from the very suggestion that she might some time do so. There was no help for her; her position could not be bettered anyhow. She knew this so well, that all struggle, except the involuntary struggle in her mind, which never could intermit, against many of the odious details of the life she had to lead, had died out of her. She had given in to the utter hopelessness of her situation. Despair is sometimes an opiate, as it is sometimes a frantic and maddening poison. There was nothing to be done for her, — no use in wearying Heaven with prayers, as some of us do. Nothing could make her better. She had given in utterly, body and soul, and this was all that was to be said. She lay there in this stillness of despair, feeling more crushed and helpless than usual after the emotions of the morning, but not otherwise disturbed, — lying like a man who has been shattered by an accident, but lulled by some anodyne draught — still and almost motionless, letting every sensation be hushed so long as nature would permit, her hands folded, her very soul

hushed and still. She took no note of time in the exhaustion of her being. She knew that when her husband returned she would be sent for, and would have to re-enter the other world of eternal strife and pain; but here she was retired, as in her chapel, in herself — the sole effectual refuge which she had left.

The house was very well organized, very silent and orderly in general, so that it surprised Lady Caroline a little, in the depth of her quiet, to hear a distant noise as of many voices, distinct, though not loud — a confusion and far-away Babel of outcries and exclamations. Nothing could be more unusual; but she felt no immediate alarm, thinking that the absence of her husband and her own withdrawal had probably permitted a little outbreak of gaiety or gossip down-stairs, with which she did not wish to interfere. She lay still accordingly, listening vaguely, without taking much interest in the matter. Certainly something out of the way must have happened. The sounds had sprung up all at once — a hum of many excited voices, with sharp cries as of dismay and wailing, breaking in. At last her attention was attracted. "There has been some accident," she said to herself, sitting upright upon her sofa. As she did this she heard steps approaching her door. They came with a rush, hurrying along, the feet of at least two women, with a heavier step behind them: then paused suddenly, and there ensued a whispering and consultation close to her door. Carry was a mother, and her first thought was of her children. "They are afraid to tell me," was the thought that passed through her mind. She rose and rushed to the door, throwing it open. "What is it? Something has happened," she said; "something you are afraid to tell me. Oh, speak, speak! — the children —"

"My leddy, it's none of the children. The children are as well as could be wished, poor dears," said her own maid, who had been suddenly revealed, standing very close to the door. The woman, her cheeks blazing with some sudden shock, eager to speak, yet terrified, stopped short there with a gasp. The housekeeper, who was behind her, pushed her a little forward, supporting her with a hand on her waist, whispering confused but audible exhortations. "Oh, take heart — oh, take heart. She must be told. The Lord will give you strength," this woman said. The butler stood solemnly behind, with a very anxious, serious countenance.

To Carry all this scene became confused by wild anxiety and terror. "What is it?" she said; "my mother? some one at home?" She stretched out her hands vaguely towards the messengers of evil, feeling like a victim at the block, upon whose neck the executioner's knife is about to fall.

"Oh, my leddy! far worse! far worse!" the woman cried.

Carry, in the dreadful whirl of her feelings, still paused bewildered, to ask herself what could be worse? And then there came upon her a moment of blindness, when she saw nothing, and the walls and the roof seemed to burst asunder, and whirl and whirl. She dropped upon her knees in this awful blank and blackness unawares, and then the haze dispelled, and she saw, coming out of the mist, a circle of horror-stricken, pale faces, forming a sort of ring round her. She could do nothing but gasp out her husband's name — "Mr. Torrance?" with quivering lips.

"Oh, my lady! my lady! To see her on her knees, and us bringin' her such awfu' news! But the Lord will comfort ye," cried the housekeeper, forgetting the veneration due to her mistress, and raising her in her arms. The two women supported her into her room, and she sat down again upon the sofa where she had been sitting — sitting, was it a year ago? — in the quiet, thinking that no change would ever come to her, — that nothing could alter her condition, that all was over and finished for her life.

And it is to be supposed that they told poor Carry exactly the truth. She never knew. When she begged them to leave her alone till her mother came, whom they had sent for, she had no distinct knowledge of how it was, or what had happened; but she knew *that* had happened. She fell upon her knees before her bed, and buried her head in her hands, shutting out the light. Then she seized hold of herself with both her hands to keep herself (as she felt) from floating away upon that flood of new life which came swelling up all in a moment, swelling into every vein — filling high the fountain of existence which had been so feeble and so low. Oh, shut out — shut out the light that nobody might see! close the doors and the shutters in the house of death, and every cranny, that no human eye might descry it! After a while she dropped lower, from the bed which supported her to the floor, prostrating herself with more than Oriental humbleness. Her

heart beat wildly, and in her brain there seemed to wake a hundred questions clanging like bells in her ears, filling the silence with sound. Her whole being, that had been crushed, sprang up like a flower from under a passing foot. Was it possible? — was it possible? She pulled herself down, tried by throwing herself upon her face on the carpet, prostrating herself, body and soul, to struggle against that secret, voiceless, mad exultation that came upon her against her will. Was he dead? — was he dead? struck down in the middle of his days, that man of iron? Oh, the pity of it! — oh, the horror of it! She tried to force herself to feel this — to keep down, down, that climbing joy in her. God in heaven, was it possible? she who thought nothing could happen to her more.

From The Cornhill Magazine.

MISS EDGEWORTH.

LATER TIMES.

VIII.

"CALAIS after a rough passage; Brussels, flat country, tiled houses, trees and ditches, the window-shutters turned out to the street; fishwives' legs, Dunkirk, and the people looking like wooden toys set in motion; Bruges and its mingled spires, shipping, and windmills." These notes of travel read as if Miss Edgeworth had been writing down only yesterday a pleasant list of the things which are to be seen two hours off, to-day no less plainly than a century ago. She jots it all down from her corner in the post-chaise, where she is propped up with a father, brother, stepmother, and sister for travelling companions, and a new book to beguile the way. She is charmed with her new book. It is the story of "*Mademoiselle de Clermont*," by Madame de Genlis, which is just out. The Edgeworths (with many other English people) rejoiced in the long-looked-for millennium, which had been signed only the previous autumn, and they now came abroad to bask in the sunshine of the Continent, which had been so long denied to our mist-bound islanders. We hear of the enthusiastic and somewhat premature joy with which this peace was received by all ranks of people. Not only did the English rush over to France; foreigners crossed to England, and one of them, an old friend of Mr. Edgeworth's, reached

Edgeworthstown, and filled its enterprising master with a desire to see those places and things once more which he heard described. Mr. Edgeworth was anxious also to show his young wife the treasures in the Louvre, and to help her to develop her taste for art. He had had many troubles of late, lost friends and children by death and by marriage. One can imagine that the change must have been welcome to them all. Besides Maria and Lovell, his eldest son, he took with him a lovely young girl, Charlotte Edgeworth, a daughter of Elizabeth Sneyd. They travelled by Belgium, stopping on their way at Bruges, at Ghent, and visiting pictures and churches along the road, as travellers still like to do. Mrs. Edgeworth was, as we have said, the artistic member of the party. We do not know what modern rhapsodists would say to Miss Edgeworth's very subdued criticisms and descriptions of feeling on this occasion. "It is extremely agreeable to me," she writes, "to see paintings with those who have excellent taste and no affectation." And this remark might perhaps be thought even more to the point now than in the pre-æsthetic age in which it was innocently made. The travellers are finally landed in Paris in a magnificent hotel in a fine square, "formerly Place Louis-Quinze, afterwards Place de la Révolution, now Place de la Concorde." And Place de la Concorde it remains, wars and revolutions notwithstanding, whether lighted by the flames of the desperate Commune or by the peaceful sunsets which stream their evening glory across the blood-stained stones.

The Edgeworths did not come as strangers to Paris; they brought letters and introductions with them, and bygone associations and friendships which had only now to be resumed. The well-known Abbé Morellet, their old acquaintance, "answered for them," says Miss Edgeworth, and besides all this Mr. Edgeworth's name was well known in scientific circles. Bréguet, Montgolfier, and others all made him welcome. Lord Henry Petty, as Maria's friend Lord Lansdowne was then called, was in Paris, and Rogers the poet, and Kosciusko, cured of his wounds. For the first time they now made the acquaintance of M. Dumont, a lifelong friend and correspondent. There were many others—the Delesserts, of the French Protestant faction, Madame Suard, to whom the romantic Thomas Day had paid court some thirty

years before, and Madame Campan, and Madame Récamier, and Madame de Rémusat, and Madame de Houdetot, now seventy-two years of age, but Rousseau's Julie still, and Camille Jordan, and the Chevalier Edelcrantz, from the court of the king of Sweden.

The names alone of the Edgeworths' entertainers represent a delightful and interesting section of the history of the time. One can imagine that besides all these pleasant and talkative persons the Faubourg Saint-Germain itself threw open its great swinging doors to the relations of the Abbé Edgeworth who risked his life to stand by his master upon the scaffold and to speak those noble, warm-hearted words, the last that Louis ever heard. One can picture the family party as it must have appeared with its pleasant British looks—the agreeable, "ruddy-faced" father, the gentle Mrs. Edgeworth, who is somewhere described by her step-daughter as so orderly, so clean, so freshly dressed, and the child of fifteen, only too beautiful and delicately lovely, and last of all Maria herself, the nice, little, unassuming Jeannie-Deans-looking body Lord Byron described, small, homely, perhaps, but with her gift of French, of charming intercourse, her fresh laurels of authorship (for "Belinda" was lately published), her bright animation, her cultivated mind and power of interesting all those in her company, to say nothing of her own kindling interest in every one and everything round about her.

Her keen delights and vivid descriptions of all these new things, faces, voices, ideas, are all to be read in some long and most charming letters to Ireland, which also contain the account of a most eventful crisis which this Paris journey brought about. The letter is dated March, 1803, and it concludes as follows:—

Here, my dear aunt, I was interrupted in a manner that will surprise you as much as it surprised me—by the coming of M. Edelcrantz, a Swedish gentleman whom we have mentioned to you, of superior understanding and mild manners. He came to offer me his hand and heart! My heart, you may suppose, cannot return his attachment, for I have seen but very little of him, and have not had time to have formed any judgment except that I think nothing could tempt me to leave my own dear friends and my own country to live in Sweden.

Maria Edgeworth was now about thirty years of age, at a time of life when people are apt to realize perhaps almost more deeply than in early youth the influence

of feeling, its importance, and strange power over events. Hitherto there are no records in her memoirs of any sentimental episodes, but it does not follow that a young lady has not had her own phase of experience because she does not write it out at length to her various aunts and correspondents. Miss Edgeworth was not a sentimental person. She was warmly devoted to her own family, and she seems to have had a strong idea of her own want of beauty; perhaps her admiration for her lovely young sisters may have caused this feeling to be exaggerated by her. But no romantic, lovely heroine could have inspired a deeper or more touching admiration than this one which M. Edelcrantz felt for his English friend; the mild and superior Swede seems to have been thoroughly in earnest.

So indeed was Miss Edgeworth, but she was not carried away by the natural impulse of the moment. She realized the many difficulties and dangers of the unknown; she looked to the future; she turned to her own home, and with an affection all the more felt because of the trial to which it was now exposed. The many lessons of self-control and self-restraint which she had learnt returned with instinctive force. Sometimes it happens that people miss what is perhaps the best for the sake of the next best, and we see convenience and old habit and expediency, and a hundred small and insignificant circumstances, gathering like some avalanche to divide hearts that might give and receive very much from each. But sentiment is not the only thing in life. Other duties, ties, and realities there are; and it is difficult to judge for others in such matters. Sincerity of heart and truth to themselves are pretty sure in the end to lead people in the right direction for their own and for other people's happiness. Only, in the experience of many women there is the danger that fixed ideas, and other people's opinion, and the force of custom may limit lives which might have been complete in greater things, though perhaps less perfect in the lesser. People in the abstract are sincere enough in wishing fulness of experience and of happiness to those dearest and nearest to them; but we are only human beings, and when the time comes and the horrible necessity for parting approaches, our courage goes, our hearts fail, and we think we are preaching reason and good sense while it is only a most natural instinct which leads us to cling to that to which we are used and to those we love.

Mr. Edgeworth did not attempt to influence Maria. Mrs. Edgeworth evidently had some misgivings, and certainly much sympathy for the chevalier and for her friend and stepdaughter. She says:—

Maria was mistaken as to her own feelings. She refused M. Edelcrantz, but she felt much more for him than esteem and admiration; she was extremely in love with him. Mr. Edgeworth left her to decide for herself; but she saw too plainly what it would be to us to lose her and what she would feel at parting with us. She decided rightly for her own future happiness and for that of her family, but she suffered much at the time and long afterwards. While we were at Paris I remember that in a shop, where Charlotte and I were making purchases, Maria sat apart absorbed in thought, and so deep in reverie that when her father came in and stood opposite to her she did not see him till he spoke to her, when she started and burst into tears. . . . I do not think she repented of her refusal or regretted her decision. She was well aware that she could not have made M. Edelcrantz happy, that she would not have suited his position at the Court of Stockholm, and that her want of beauty might have diminished his attachment. It was perhaps better she should think so, for it calmed her mind; but from what I saw of M. Edelcrantz I think he was a man capable of really valuing her. I believe he was much attached to her, and deeply mortified at her refusal. He continued to reside in Sweden after the abdication of his master, and was always distinguished for his high character and great abilities. He never married. He was, except for his very fine eyes, remarkably plain.

So ends the romance of the romancer. There are, however, many happinesses in life, as there are many troubles.

Mrs. Edgeworth tells us that after her stepdaughter's return to Edgeworthtown she occupied herself with various literary works, correcting some of her former MSS. for the press, and writing "*Madame de Fleury*," "*Emilie de Coulanges*," and "*Leonora*." But the high-flown and romantic style did not suit her gift, and she wrote best when her genuine interest and unaffected glances shone with bright understanding sympathy upon her immediate surroundings. When we are told that "*Leonora*" was written in the style the Chevalier Edelcrantz preferred, and that the idea of what he would think of it was present to Maria in every page, we begin to realize that for us at all events it was a most fortunate thing that she decided as she did. It would have been a loss indeed to the world if this kindling and delightful spirit of hers had been choked by the polite thorns, fictions, and plati-

tudes of an artificial, courtly life and by the well-ordered narrowness of a limited standard. She never heard what the chevalier thought of the book; she never knew that he ever read it even. It is a satisfaction to hear that he married no one else, and while she sat writing and not forgetting in the pleasant library at home, one can imagine the romantic chevalier in his distant court faithful to the sudden and romantic devotion by which he is now remembered. Romantic and chivalrous friendship seems to belong to his country and to his countrymen.

IX.

THERE are one or two other episodes less sentimental than this one recorded of this visit to Paris, not the least interesting of these being the account given of a call upon Madame de Genlis. The younger author from her own standpoint having resolutely turned away from the voice of the charmer for the sake of that which she is convinced to be duty and good sense, now somewhat sternly takes the measure of her elder sister, who has failed in the struggle, who is alone and friendless, and who has made her fate.

The story is too long to quote at full length. An isolated page without its setting loses very much; the previous description of the darkness and uncertainty through which Maria and her father go wandering, and asking their way in vain, adds immensely to the sense of the gloom and isolation which hides the close of a long and brilliant career. At last the travellers compel a reluctant porter to show them the staircase in the Arsenal, where Madame de Genlis is living, and to point out the door before he goes off with the light.

They wait in darkness for the door to be opened.

After ringing this bell we presently heard doors open and little footsteps approaching nigh. The door was opened by a girl of about Honora's size, holding an ill set-up, wavering candle in her hand, the light of which fell full upon her face and figure. Her face was remarkably intelligent—dark sparkling eyes, dark hair curled in the most fashionable long corkscrew ringlets over her eyes and cheeks. She parted the ringlets to take a full view of us. The dress of her figure by no means suited the head and elegance of her attitude. What her nether weeds might be we could not distinctly see, but they seemed a coarse short petticoat like what Molly Bristow's children would wear. After surveying us and hearing our name was Edgeworth she smiled graciously and bid us follow her, saying, "Maman est chez

elle." She led the way with the grace of a young lady who has been taught to dance across two ante-chambers, miserable-looking; but, miserable or not, no home in Paris can be without them. The girl, or young lady, for we were still in doubt which to think her, led into a small room in which the candles were so well screened by a green tin screen that we could scarcely distinguish the tall form of a lady in black who rose from her chair by the fireside; as the door opened a great puff of smoke came from the huge fireplace at the same moment. She came forward, and we made our way towards her as well as we could through a confusion of tables, chairs, and work-baskets, china, writing-desks and inkstands, and birdcages, and a harp. She did not speak, and as her back was now turned to both fire and candle I could not see her face or anything but the outline of her form and her attitude. Her form was the remains of a fine form, her attitude that of a woman used to a better drawing-room.

I being foremost, and she silent, was compelled to speak to the figure in darkness. "Madame de Genlis nous a fait l'honneur de nous mander qu'elle voulait bien nous permettre de lui rendre visite," said I, or words to that effect, to which she replied by taking my hand and saying something in which "charmée" was the most intelligible word. While she spoke she looked over my shoulder at my father, whose bow, I presume, told her he was a gentleman, for she spoke to him immediately as if she wished to please and seated us in *fauteuils* near the fire.

I then had a full view of her face—figure very thin and melancholy dark eyes, long sal-low cheeks, compressed thin lips, two or three black ringlets on a high forehead, a cap that Mrs. Grier might wear—altogether an appearance of fallen fortunes, worn-out health, and excessive but guarded irritability. To me there was nothing of that engaging, captivating manner which I had been taught to expect. She seemed to me to be alive only to literary quarrels and jealousies. The muscles of her face as she spoke, or as my father spoke to her, quickly and too easily expressed hatred and anger. . . . She is now, you know, *dévote acharnée*. . . . Madame de Genlis seems to have been so much used to being attacked that she has defence and apologies ready prepared. She spoke of Madame de Staël's "Delphine" with detestation. . . . Forgive me, my dear Aunt Mary; you begged me to see her with favorable eyes, and I went, after seeing her "*Rosière de Salency*," with the most favorable disposition, but I could not like her. . . . And from time to time I saw, or thought I saw, through the gloom of her countenance a gleam of coquetry. But my father judges of her much more favorably than I do. She evidently took pains to please him, and *he says he is sure she is a person over whose mind he could gain great ascendancy.*

The "young and gay philosopher" at

fifty is not unchanged since we knew him first. Maria adds a postscript:—

I had almost forgotten to tell you that the little girl who showed us in is a girl whom she is educating. "Elle m'appelle maman, mais elle n'est pas ma fille." The manner in which this little girl spoke to Madame de Genlis and looked at her appeared to me more in her favor than anything else. I went to look at what the child was writing; she was translating Darwin's "Zoonomia."

Every description one reads by Miss Edgeworth of actual things and people makes one wish that she had written more of them. This one is the more interesting from the contrast of the two women, both so remarkable and coming to so different a result in their experience of life.

This eventful visit to Paris is brought to an eventful termination by several gendarmes, who appear early one morning in Mr. Edgeworth's bedroom with orders that he is to get up and to leave Paris immediately. Mr. Edgeworth had been accused of being brother to the Abbé de Firmont. When the mitigated circumstance of his being only a first cousin was put forward by Lord Whitworth, the English ambassador, the Edgeworths received permission to return from the suburb to which they had retired; but private news hurried their departure, and they were only in time to escape the general blockade and detention of English prisoners. After little more than a year of peace, once more war was declared on May 20, 1803. Lovell, the eldest son, who was absent at the time and travelling from Switzerland, was not able to escape in time; nor for twelve years to come was the young man able to return to his own home and family.

X.

"BELINDA," "Castle Rackrent," the "Parents' Assistant," the "Essays on Practical Education," had all made their mark. The new series of popular tales was also welcomed. There were other books on the way: Miss Edgeworth had several MSS. in hand in various stages, stories to correct for the press. There was also a long novel, first begun by her father and taken up and carried on by her. The "Essays on Practical Education," which were first published in 1798, continued to be read. M. Pictet had translated the book into French the year before; a third edition was published some ten years later, in 1811, in the preface of which the authors say, "It is due to the

public to state that twelve years' additional experience in a numerous family, and careful attention to the results of other modes of education, have given the authors no reason to retract what they have advanced in these volumes."

In Mr. Edgeworth's memoirs, however, his daughter states that he modified his opinions in one or two particulars; allowing more and more liberty to the children, and at the same time conceding greater importance to the habit of early though mechanical efforts of memory. The essays seem in every way in advance of their time; many of the hints contained in them most certainly apply to the little children of to-day no less than to their small grandparents. A lady whose own name is high in the annals of education was telling me that she had been greatly struck by the resemblance between the Edgeworth system and that of Froebel's Kindergarten method, which is now gaining more and more ground in people's estimation, the object of both being not so much to cram instruction into early youth as to draw out each child's powers of observation and attention.

The first series of tales of fashionable life came out in 1809, and contained among other stories "Ennui," one of the most remarkable of Miss Edgeworth's works. The second series included "The Absentee," that delightful story of which the lesson should be impressed upon us even more than in the year 1812. "The Absentee" was at first only an episode in the longer novel of "Patronage;" but the public was impatient, so were the publishers, and fortunately for every one "The Absentee" was printed as a separate tale.

"Patronage" had been begun by Mr. Edgeworth to amuse his wife, who was recovering from illness; it was originally called the "Fortunes of the Freeman Family," and it is a history with a moral. Morals were more in fashion then than they are now, but this one is obvious without any commentary upon it. It is tolerably certain that clever, industrious, well-conducted people will succeed where idle, scheming, and untrustworthy persons will eventually fail to get on even with powerful friends to back them. But the novel has yet to be written that will prove that, where merits are more equal, a little patronage is not of a great deal of use, or that people's positions in life are exactly proportioned to their merit. Mrs. Barbauld's pretty essay on the inconsistency of human expectations contains the best possible answer to the problem of what

people's deserts should be. Let us hope that personal advancement is only one of the many things people try for in life, and that there are other prizes as well worth having. Miss Edgeworth herself somewhere speaks with warm admiration of this very essay. Of the novel itself she says (writing to Mrs. Barbauld), "It is so vast a subject that it flounders about in my hands and quite overpowers me."

It is in this same letter that Miss Edgeworth mentions another circumstance which interested her at this time, and which was one of those events occurring now and again to do equal credit to all concerned.

I have written a preface and notes [she says] — for I too would be an editor — for a little book which a very worthy countrywoman of mine is going to publish: Mrs. Leadbeater, granddaughter to Burke's first preceptor. She is poor. She has behaved most handsomely about some letters of Burke's to her grandfather and herself. It would have been advantageous to her to publish them; but as Mrs. Burke* — Heaven knows why — objected she desisted.

Mrs. Leadbeater was an Irish Quaker lady whose simple and spirited annals of Ballitore delighted Carlyle in his later days, and whose "Cottage Dialogues" greatly struck Mr. Edgeworth at the time. She had written them to assist her family, and the kind Edgeworths, finding her quite unused to publishing transactions, exerted themselves in every way to help her. Mr. Edgeworth took the MSS. out of the hands of an Irish publisher, and, says Maria, "our excellent friend's worthy successor in St. Paul's Churchyard has, on our recommendation, agreed to publish it for her." Mr. Edgeworth's own letter to Mrs. Leadbeater gives the history of his good-natured offices and their satisfactory results.

From R. L. Edgeworth, July 5, 1810.

Miss Edgeworth desires me as a man of business to write to Mrs. Leadbeater relative to the publication of "Cottage Dialogues." Miss Edgeworth has written an advertisement, and will, with Mrs. Leadbeater's permission, write notes for an English edition. The scheme which I propose is of two parts — to sell the English copyright to the house of Johnson in London, where we dispose of our own works, and to publish a very large and cheap edition for Ireland for schools. . . . I can probably introduce the book into many places. Our family takes 300 copies, Lady

Longford 50, Dr. Beaufort 20, etc. . . . I think Johnson and Co. will give 50*l.* for the English copyright.

After the transaction Mr. Edgeworth wrote to the publishers as follows: —

May 31, 1811: Edgeworthstown.

My sixty-eighth birthday.

My dear Gentlemen, — I have just heard your letter to Mrs. Leadbeater read by one who dropped tears of pleasure from a sense of your generous and handsome conduct. I take great pleasure in speaking of you to the rest of the world as you deserve, and I cannot refrain from expressing to yourselves the genuine esteem that I feel for you. I know that this direct praise is scarcely allowable, but my advanced age and my close connexion with you must be my excuse. — Yours sincerely,

R. L. E.

Tears seem equivalent to something more than the estimated value of Mrs. Leadbeater's labors. Let us hope that the kind publishers may have behaved even more handsomely than Mr. Edgeworth expected. Miss Edgeworth's notes must also be taken into account. The charming and well-known Mrs. Trench, who was also Mary Leadbeater's friend, writes to her praising them warmly. "Miss Edgeworth's notes on your Dialogues have as much spirit and originality as if she had never before explored the mine which many thought she had exhausted."

All these are pleasant specimens of the Edgeworth correspondence, which, however (following the course of most correspondence), does not seem to have been always equally agreeable. There are some letters (among others which I have been allowed to see) written by her about the time to an unfortunate young man who seems to have annoyed her greatly by his excited importunities.

I thank you [she says] for your friendly zeal in defence of my powers of pathos and sublimity; but I think it carries you much too far when it leads you to imagine that I refrain from principle or virtue from displaying powers that I really do not possess. I assure you that I am not in the least capable of writing a dithyrambic ode, or any other kind of ode.

One is reminded by this suggestion of poor Jane Austen also having to decline to write "an historical novel illustrative of the august house of Coburg." The young man himself seems to have had some wild aspirations after authorship, but to have feared criticism.

The advantage of the art of printing [says his friendly Minerva] is that the mistakes of individuals in reasoning and writing will be corrected in time by the public, so that the

* Mrs. Burke, hearing more of the circumstances, afterwards sent permission, but Mrs. Leadbeater being a Quakeress, and having once *promised* not to publish, could not take it upon herself to break her covenant.

cause of truth cannot suffer; and I presume you are too much of a philosopher to mind the trifling mortification that the detection of a mistake might occasion. You know that some sensible person has observed that acknowledging a mistake is saying only in other words that we are wiser to-day than we were yesterday.

He seems at last to have passed the bounds of reasonable correspondence, and she writes as follows:—

Your last letter, dated in June, was many months before it reached me. In answer to all your reproaches at my silence I can only assure you that it was not caused by any change in my opinions or good wishes; but I do not carry on what is called a regular correspondence with anybody except with one or two of my very nearest relations; and it is best to tell the plain truth that my father particularly dislikes my writing letters, so I write as few as I possibly can.

XI.

WHILE Maria Edgeworth was at work in her Irish home, successfully producing her admirable delineations, another woman, born some eight years later, and living in the quiet Hampshire village where the elm-trees spread so greenly, was also at work, also writing books that were destined to influence many a generation, but which were meanwhile waiting unknown, unnoticed. Do we not all know the story of the brown paper parcel lying unopened for years on the publisher's shelf and containing Henry Tilney and all his capes, Catherine Morland and all her romance, and the great John Thorpe himself, uttering those valuable literary criticisms which Lord Macaulay, writing to his little sisters at home, used to quote? "Oh, Lord!" says John Thorpe, "I never read novels; I have other things to do." A friend reminds us of Miss Austen's own indignant outburst. "Only a novel! only 'Cecilia,' or 'Camilla,' or 'Belinda';' or, in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humor, are conveyed to the world in the best-chosen language." If the great historian, who loved novels himself, had not assured us that we owe Miss Austen and Miss Edgeworth to the early influence of the author of "Evelina," one might grudge "Belinda" to such company.

"Pride and Prejudice" and "Northanger Abbey" were published about the

same time as "Patronage" and "Tales of Fashionable Life." Their two authors illustrate, curiously enough, the difference between the national characteristics of English and Irish—the breadth, the versatility, the innate wit and gaiety of an Irish mind; the comparative narrowness of range of an English nature; where, however, we may get humor and its never-failing charm. Long afterwards Jane Austen sent one of her novels to Miss Edgeworth, who appreciated it indeed, as such a mind as hers could not fail to do, but it was with no such enthusiasm as that which she felt for other more ambitious works, with more of incident, power, knowledge of the world, in the place of that one subtle quality of humor which for some persons outweighs almost every other. Something, some indefinite sentiment, tells people where they amalgamate and with whom they are intellectually akin; and by some such process of criticism the writer feels that in this little memoir of Miss Edgeworth she has but sketched the outer likeness of this remarkable woman's life and genius; and that she has scarcely done justice to very much in Miss Edgeworth, which so many of the foremost men of her day could appreciate, a power, a versatility, an interest in subjects for their own sakes, not for the sakes of those who are interested in them, which was essentially hers.

It is always interesting to watch a writer's progress in the estimation of critics and reviewers. In 1809 Miss Edgeworth is moderately and respectfully noticed. "As a writer of novels and tales she has a marked peculiarity, that of venturing to dispense common sense to her readers and to bring them within the precincts of real life. Without excluding love from her pages she knows how to assign to it its true limits." In 1812 the reviewer, more used to hear the author's praises on all sides, now starts from a higher key, and, as far as truth to nature and delineation of character are concerned, does not allow a rival except "Don Quixote" and "Gil Blas." The following criticism is just and more to the point:—

To this power of masterly and minute delineation of character Miss Edgeworth adds another which has rarely been combined with the former, that of interweaving the peculiarities of her persons with the conduct of her piece, and making them, without forgetting for a moment their personal consistency, conduce to the general lesson. . . . Her virtue and vice, though copied exactly from nature, lead with perfect ease to a moral conclusion, and

are finally punished or rewarded by means which (rare as retribution in this world is) appear for the most part neither inconsistent nor unnatural.

Then follows a review of "Vivian" and of "The Absentee," which is perhaps the most admirable of her works. We may all remember how Macaulay once pronounced that the scene in "The Absentee" where Lord Colambre discovers himself to his tenantry was the best thing of the sort since the opening of the twenty-second book of the *Odyssey*.

An article by Lord Dudley, which is still to be quoted, appeared in the *Quarterly Review* in 1814. What he says of her works applies no less to Miss Edgeworth's own life than to the principles which she inculcates.

The old rule was for heroes and heroines to fall suddenly and irretrievably in love. If they fell in love with the right person so much the better; if not, it could not be helped, and the novel ended unhappily. And, above all, it was held quite irregular for the most reasonable people to make any use whatever of their reason on the most important occasion of their lives. Miss Edgeworth has presumed to treat this mighty power with far less reverence. She has analysed it and found it does not consist of one simple element, but that several common ingredients enter into its composition—habit, esteem, a belief of some corresponding sentiment and of suitableness in the character and circumstances of the party. She has pronounced that reason, timely and vigorously applied, is almost a specific, and, following up this bold empirical line of practice, she has actually produced cases of the entire cure of persons who had labored under its operation. Her favorite qualities are prudence, firmness, temper, and that active, vigilant good sense which, without checking the course of our kind affections, exercises its influence at every moment and surveys deliberately the motives and consequences of every action. Utility is her object, reason and experience her means.

XII.

THIS review of Lord Dudley's must have come out after a visit from the Edgeworth family to London in 1813, which seems to have been a most brilliant and amusing campaign. "I know the homage that was paid you," wrote Mrs. Barbauld, speaking of the event, "and I exulted in it for your sake and for my sex's sake." Miss Edgeworth was at the height of her popularity, in good spirits and good health. Mr. Edgeworth was seventy, but he looked years younger, and was still in undiminished health and vigor. The party was welcomed, fêted, sought after everywhere. Except that

they miss seeing Madame d'Arblay and leave London before the arrival of Madame de Staël, they seem to have come in for everything that was brilliant, fashionable, and entertaining. They breakfast with poets, they sup with marquises, they call upon duchesses and scientific men. Maria's old friend the Duchess of Wellington is not less her friend than she was in County Longford. Every one likes them and comes knocking at their lodging-house door while Maria up-stairs is writing a letter, standing at a chest of drawers. "Miss Edgeworth is delightful," says Tom Moore, "not from display, but from repose and unaffectedness, the least pretending person." Even Lord Byron writes warmly of the authoress whose company is so grateful, and who goes her simple, pleasant way cheerful and bringing kind cheer, and making friends with the children as well as with the elders. Many of these children in their lives fully justified her interest, children whom we in turn have known and looked up to as distinguished grey-headed men.

Some one once asked Miss Edgeworth how she came to understand children as she did, what charm she used to win them. "I don't know," she said kindly; "I lie down and let them crawl over me." She was greatly pleased on one occasion when at a crowded party a little girl suddenly started forth, looked at her hard, and said, "I like simple Susan best," and rushed away overwhelmed at her own audacity. The same lady who was present on this occasion asked her a question which we must all be grateful to have solved for us—how it happened that the respective places of Laura and Rosamond came to be transposed in "Patronage," Laura having been the wiser elder sister in "The Purple Jar," and appearing suddenly as the younger in the novel. Miss Edgeworth laughed and said that Laura had been so preternaturally wise and thoughtful as a child, she could never have kept her up to the mark, and so she thought it best to change the character altogether.

During one of her visits to London Miss Edgeworth went to dine at the house of Mr. Marshall; and his daughter, Lady Monteagle, tells a little story which gives an impression, and a kind one, of the celebrated guest. Everything had been prepared in her honor, the lights lighted, the viands were cooked. Dinner was announced, and some important person was brought forward to hand Miss Edgeworth down, when it was discovered

that she had vanished. For a moment the company and the dinner were all at a standstill. She was a small person, but diligent search was made. Miss Edgeworth had last been seen with the children of the house, and she was eventually found in the back kitchen, escorted by the said children, who, having confided their private affairs to her sympathetic ear, had finally invited her to come with them and see some rabbits which they were rearing down below. A lady who used to live at Clifton as a little girl, and to be sometimes prescribed for by Dr. King, was once brought up to Miss Edgeworth, and she told me how very much puzzled she felt when the bright old lady, taking her by the hand, said, "Well, my dear, how do you do, and how is my excellent brother-in-law?" One can imagine what a vague sort of being an "excellent brother-in-law" would seem to a very young child.

We read in Miss Edgeworth's memoir of her father that Mr. Edgeworth recovered from his serious illness in 1814 to enjoy a few more years of life among his friends, his children, and his experiments. His good humor and good spirits were undiminished, and he used to quote an old friend's praise of "the privileges and convenience of old age." He was seventy, but he seems to have continued his own education to the end of life. "Without affecting to be young, he exerted himself to prevent any of his faculties from sinking into the indolent state which portends their decay," and his daughter says that he went on learning to the last, correcting his faults and practising his memory by various devices, so that it even improved with age.

In one of his last letters to Mrs. Beaufort, his wife's mother, he speaks with no little paternal pleasure of his home and his children: "Such excellent principles, such just views of human life and manners, such cultivated understandings, such charming tempers make a little Paradise about me;" while with regard to his daughter's works he adds concerning the book which was about to appear, "If Maria's tales fail with the public, you will hear of my hanging myself."

Mr. Edgeworth died in the summer of 1817, at home, surrounded by his family, grateful, as he says, to Providence for allowing his body to perish before his mind.

During the melancholy months which succeeded her father's death Maria hardly wrote any letters; her sight was in a most alarming

state. The tears, she said, felt in her eyes like the cutting of a knife. She had overworked them all the previous winter, sitting up at night and struggling with her grief as she wrote "Ormond." She was now unable to use them without pain. . . . Edgeworthstown now belonged to Lovell, the eldest surviving brother, but he wished it to continue the home of the family. Maria set to work to complete her father's memoirs and to fulfil his last wish.

It was not without great hesitation and anxiety that she set to work to complete her father's "Life." There is a touching sentence in a letter to her aunt Ruxton. "I felt the happiness of my life was at stake. Even if all the rest of the world had praised it and you had been dissatisfied, how miserable should I have been!" And there is another sentence written at Bowood, very sad and full of remembrance. "I feel as if I had lived a hundred years and was left alive after everybody else." The book came out, and many things were said about it, not all praise. The *Quarterly* was so spiteful and intolerant that it seemed almost personal in its violence. It certainly would have been a great loss to the world had this curious and interesting memoir never been published, but at the time the absence of certain phrases and expressions of opinions which Mr. Edgeworth had never specially professed seemed greatly to offend the reviewers.

The worst of these attacks Miss Edgeworth never read, and the task finished, the sad months over, the poor eyes recovered, she crossed to England.

XIII.

ONE is glad to hear of her away and at Bowood in good company, in all senses of the word. Her old friend Lord Henry Petty, now Lord Lansdowne, was still her friend and full of kindness. Outside the house spread a green deer-park to rest her tired eyes, within were pleasant and delightful companions to cheer her soul. Sir Samuel Romilly was there, of whom she speaks with affectionate admiration, as she does of her kind host and hostess. "I much enjoy the sight of Lady Lansdowne's happiness with her husband and her children. Beauty, fortune, cultivated society all united—in short, everything that the most reasonable or unreasonable could wish. She is so amiable and desirous to make others happy."

Miss Edgeworth's power of making other people see with her eyes is very remarkable in all these letters; with a little imagination one could almost feel as

if one might be able to travel back into the pleasant society in which she lived. When she goes abroad soon after with her two younger sisters (Fanny, the baby whose head so nearly came off in her arms, and Harriet, who have both grown up by this time to be pretty and elegant young ladies), the sisters are made welcome everywhere. In Paris, as in London, troops of acquaintance came forward to receive "Madame Maria et mesdemoiselles ses sœurs," as they used to be announced. Most of their old friends were there still; only the children had grown up and were now new friends to be greeted. It is a confusion of names in visionary succession, comprising English people no less than French. Miss Edgeworth notes it all with a sure hand and true pen; it is as one of the sketch-books of a great painter, where whole pictures are indicated in a few just lines. Here is a peep at the Abbaye aux Bois in 1820:—

We went to Madame Récamier in her convent, l'Abbaye aux Bois, up seventy-eight steps. All came in with asthma. Elegant room; she as elegant as ever. Matthieu de Montmorenci, the ex-Queen of Sweden, Madame de Boigne, a charming woman, and Madame la Maréchale de —, a battered beauty, smelling of garlic and screeching in vain to pass as a wit. . . . Madame Récamier has no more taken the veil than I have, and is as little likely to do it. She is quite beautiful; she dresses herself and her little room with elegant simplicity, and lives in a convent only because it is cheap and respectable.

One sees it all, the convent, the company, the last refrain of former triumphs, the faithful romantic Matthieu de Montmorenci, and above all the poor Maréchale, who will screech forever in her garlic. Let us turn the page, we find another picture from these not long past days:—

Breakfast at Camille Jordan's; it was half past twelve before the company assembled, and we had an hour's delightful conversation with Camille Jordan and his wife in her spotless white muslin and little cap, sitting at her husband's feet as he lay on the sofa; as clean, as nice, as fresh, as thoughtless of herself as my mother. At this breakfast we saw three of the most distinguished of that party who call themselves "les Doctrinaires" and say they are more attached to measures than to men.

Here is another portrait of a portrait and its painter:—

Princess Potemkin is a Russian, but she has all the grace, softness, winning manner of the Polish ladies. Oval face, pale, with the finest, softest, most expressive chestnut dark eyes.

She has a sort of politeness which pleases peculiarly, a mixture of the ease of high rank and early habit with something that is sentimental without affectation. Madame le Brun is painting her picture. Madame le Brun is sixty-six, with great vivacity as well as genius, and better worth seeing than her pictures, for though they are speaking she speaks.

Another visit the sisters paid, which will interest the readers of Madame de la Rochejaquelin's memoirs of the war in the Vendée:—

In a small bedroom, well furnished, with a fire just lighted, we found Madame de la Rochejaquelin on the sofa; her two daughters at work, one spinning with a distaff, the other embroidering muslin. Madame is a fat woman with a broad, round, fair face and a most benevolent expression, her hair cut short and perfectly grey as seen under her cap; the rest of the face much too young for such grey locks; and though her face and bundled form all squashed on to a sofa did not at first promise much of gentility, you could not hear her speak or hear her for three minutes without perceiving that she was well-born and well-bred.

Madame de la Rochejaquelin seems to have confided in Miss Edgeworth.

"I am always sorry when any stranger sees me, *parce que je sais que je détruis toute illusion, je sais que je devrais avoir l'air d'une héroïne.*" She is much better than a heroine; she is benevolence and truth itself.

We must not forget the scientific world where Madame Maria was no less at home than in fashionable literary cliques. The sisters saw something of Cuvier at Paris; in Switzerland they travelled with the Aragons. They were on their way to the Marcets at Geneva when they stopped at Coppet, where Miss Edgeworth was always specially happy in the society of Madame Auguste de Staël and Madame de Broglie. But Switzerland is not one of the places where only human beings are in the ascendant; other influences there are almost stronger than human ones. "I did not conceive it possible that I should feel so much pleasure from the beauties of nature as I have done since I came to this country. The first moment when I saw Mont Blanc will remain an era in my life—a new idea, a new feeling standing alone in the mind." Miss Edgeworth presently comes down from her mountain heights and, full of interest, throws herself into the talk of her friends at Coppet and Geneva, from which she quotes as it occurs to her. Here is Rocca's indignant speech to Lord Byron, who was abusing the stupidity of

the Genevese. "Eh! milord, pourquoi venir vous fourrer parmi ces honnêtes gens?" There is Arago's curious anecdote of Napoleon, who sent for him after the battle of Waterloo, offering him a large sum of money to accompany him to America. The emperor had formed a project for founding a scientific colony in the New World. Arago was so indignant with him for abandoning his troops that he would have nothing to say to the plan. A far more touching story is Dr. Marcet's account of Josephine. "Poor Josephine! Do you remember Dr. Marcet's telling us that when he breakfasted with her she said, pointing to her flowers, 'These are my subjects. I try to make them happy?'"

Among other expeditions they made a pilgrimage to the home of the author of a work for which Miss Edgeworth seems to have entertained a mysterious enthusiasm. The novel was called "*Caroline de Lichfield*," and was so much admired at the time that Miss Seward mentions a gentleman who wrote from abroad to propose for the hand of the authoress, and who, more fortunate than the poor Chevalier Edelcrantz, was not refused by the lady. Perhaps some similarity of experience may have led Maria Edgeworth to wish for the lady's acquaintance. Happily time was past for Miss Edgeworth to look back; her life was now shaped and moulded in its own groove; the consideration, the variety, the difficulties of unmarried life were hers, its agreeable change, its monotony of feeling and of unselfish happiness, compared with the necessary regularity, the more personal felicity, the less liberal interests of the married. Her life seems to have been full to overflowing of practical occupation and consideration for others. What changing scenes and colors, what a number of voices, what a crowd of outstretched hands, what interesting processions of people pass across her path! There is something of her father's optimism and simplicity of nature in her unceasing brightness and activity, in her resolutions to improve as time goes on. Her young brothers and sisters grow to be men and women; with her sisters' marriages new interests touch her warm heart. Between her and the brothers of the younger generation who did not turn to her as a sort of mother there may have been too great a difference of age for that companionship to continue which often exists between a child and a grown-up person. So at least one is led to believe was the case as re-

gards one of them, mentioned in a memoir which has recently appeared. But to her sisters she could be friend, protector, chaperone, sympathizing companion, and elder sister to the end of her days. We hear of them all at Bowood again on their way back to Ireland, and then we find them all at home settling down to the old life, Maria reading Sévigné of whom she never tires.

XIV.

ONE of the prettiest and most sympathetic incidents in Maria Edgeworth's life was a subsequent expedition to Abbotsford and the pleasure she gave to its master. They first met in Edinburgh, and her short account conjures up the whole scene before us:—

Ten o'clock struck as I read his note. We were tired, we were not fit to be seen, but I thought it right to accept Walter Scott's cordial invitation, sent for a hackney coach, and just as we were, without dressing, we went. As the coach stopped we saw the hall lighted, and the moment the door opened heard the joyous sounds of loud singing. Three servants' "*The Miss Edgeworths!*" sounded from hall to landing-place, and as I paused for a moment in the anteroom I heard the first sound of Walter Scott's voice—"The Miss Edgeworths *come!*" The room was lighted by only one globe lamp; a circle were singing loud and beating time: all stopped in an instant.

Is not this picture complete? Scott himself she describes as "full of genius without the slightest effort at expression, delightfully natural, more lame but not so unwieldy as she expected." Lady Scott she goes on to sketch in some half-dozen words, "French, large dark eyes, civil and good-natured."

When we wakened the next morning the whole scene of the preceding night seemed like a dream [she continues]; however at twelve came the real Lady Scott, and we called for Scott at the Parliament House, who came out of the Courts with joyous face, as if he had nothing on earth to do or to think of but to show us Edinburgh.

In her quick, discriminating way she looks round and notes them all one by one.

Mr. Lockhart is reserved and silent, but he appears to have much sensibility under this reserve. Mrs. Lockhart is very pleasing—a slight, elegant figure and graceful simplicity of manner, perfectly natural. There is something most winning in her affectionate manner to her father. He dotes upon her.

A serious illness intervened for poor Maria before she and her devoted young nurses could reach Abbotsford itself.

There she began to recover, and Lady Scott watched over her and prescribed for her with the most tender care and kindness. "Lady Scott felt the attention and respect Maria showed to her, perceiving that she valued her and treated her as a friend," says Mrs. Edgeworth; "not, as too many of Sir Walter's guests did, with neglect." This is Miss Edgeworth's description of the Abbotsford family life:

It is quite delightful to see Scott and his family in the country; breakfast, dinner, supper, the same flow of kindness, fondness, and genius, far, far surpassing his works, his letters, and all my hopes and imagination. His Castle of Abbotsford is magnificent, but I forget it in thinking of him.

The return visit, when Scotland visited Ireland, was no less successful.

Maria and my daughter Harriet accompanied Sir Walter and Miss Scott, Mr. Lockhart, and Captain and Mrs. Scott to Killarney. They travelled in an open caleche of Sir Walter's. . .

Sir Walter was, like Maria, never put out by discomforts on a journey, but always ready to make the best of everything and to find amusement in every incident. He was delighted with Maria's eagerness for everybody's comfort, and diverted himself with her admiration of a green baize-covered door at the inn at Killarney. "Miss Edgeworth, you are so mightily pleased with that door, I think you will carry it away with you to Edgeworthstown."

Miss Edgeworth's friendships were certainly very remarkable, and comprise almost all the interesting people of her day in France as well as in England. She was liked, trusted, surrounded, and she appears to have had the art of winning to her all the great men. We know the Duke of Wellington addressed verses to her; there are pleasant intimations of her acquaintance with Sir James Mackintosh, Romilly, Moore, and Rogers, and that most delightful of human beings Sydney Smith, whom she thoroughly appreciated and admired. Describing her brother Frank, she says, somewhere, "I am much inclined to think that he has a natural genius for happiness; in other words, as Sydney Smith would say, *great hereditary constitutional joy*." "To attempt to Boswell Sydney Smith's conversation would be to outboswell Boswell," she writes in another letter home; but in Lady Holland's memoir of her father there is a pleasant little account of Miss Edgeworth herself, "delightful, clever, and sensible," listening to Sydney Smith. She seems to have gone the round of his parish with him while he scolded, doc-

tored, joked his poor people according to their needs.

"During her visit she saw much of my father," says Lady Holland; "and her talents as well as her thorough knowledge and love of Ireland made her conversation peculiarly agreeable to him." On her side Maria writes warmly desiring that some Irish bishopric might be forced upon Sydney Smith, which "his own sense of natural charity and humanity would forbid him refuse. . . In the twinkling of an eye — such an eye as his — he would see all our manifold grievances up and down the country. One word, one *bon mot* of his, would do more for us, I guess, than —'s four hundred pages and all the like with which we have been bored."

The two knew how to make good company for one another; the quiet Jeanie Deans body could listen as well as give out. We are told that it was not so much that she said brilliant things, but that a general perfume of wit ran through her conversation, and she most certainly had the gift of appreciating the good things of others. Whether in that "scene of simplicity, truth, and nature" a London rout, or in some quiet Hampstead parlor talking to an old friend, or in her own home among books and relations and interests of every sort, Miss Edgeworth seems to have been constantly the same, with presence of mind and presence of heart too, ready to respond to everything. I think her warmth of heart shines even brighter than her wit at times. "I could not bear the idea that you suspected me of being so weak, so vain, so senseless," she once wrote to Mrs. Barbauld, "as to have my head turned by a little fashionable flattery." If her head was not turned it must have been because her spirit was stout enough to withstand the world's almost irresistible influence.

Not only the great men but the women too are among her friends. She writes prettily of Mrs. Somerville, with her smiling eyes and pink color, her soft voice, strong, well-bred Scotch accent, timid, not disqualifying timid, but naturally modest. "While her head is among the stars her feet are firm upon the earth." She is "delighted" with a criticism of Madame de Staël's, in a letter to M. Dumont. "Vraiment elle était digne de l'enthousiasme, mais elle se perd dans votre triste utilité." It is difficult to understand why this should have given Miss Edgeworth so much pleasure; and here finally is a little vision conjured up for us of her

meeting with Mrs. Fry among her prisoners.

Little doors, and thick doors, and doors of all sorts were unbolted and unlocked, and on we went through dreary but clean passages till we came to a room where rows of empty benches fronted us, a table on which lay a large Bible. Several ladies and gentlemen entered, took their seats on benches at either side of the table in silence. Enter Mrs. Fry in a drab-colored silk cloak and a plain, borderless Quaker cap, a most benevolent countenance, calm, benign. "I must make an enquiry. Is Maria Edgeworth here?" And when I went forward she bade me come and sit beside her. Her first smile as she looked upon me I can never forget. The prisoners came in in an orderly manner and ranged themselves upon the benches.

xv.

"IN this my sixtieth year, to commence in a few days," says Miss Edgeworth, writing to her cousin Margaret Ruxton, "I am resolved to make great progress." "Rosamond at sixty," says Miss Ruxton, touched and amused. Her resolutions were not idle.

"The universal difficulties of the money market in the year 1826 were felt by us," says Mrs. Edgeworth in her memoir, "and Maria, who since her father's death had given up rent-receiving, now resumed it; undertook the management of her brother Lovell's affairs, which she conducted with consummate skill and perseverance, and weathered the storm that swamped so many in this financial crisis." We also hear of an opportune windfall in the shape of some valuable diamonds, which an old lady, a distant relation, left in her will to Miss Edgeworth, who sold them and built a market-house for Edgeworthtown with the proceeds.

April 8, 1827. — I am quite well, and in high good humor and good spirits, in consequence of having received the whole of Lovell's half-year's rents in full, with pleasure to the tenants and without the least fatigue or anxiety to myself.

It was about this time her novel of "Helen" was written, the last of her books, the only one that her father had not revised. There is a vivid account given by one of her brothers of the family assembled in the library to hear the manuscript read out, of their anxiety and their pleasure as they realized how good it was, how spirited, how well equal to her standard. Ticknor, in his account of Miss Edgeworth, says that the talk of Lady Davenant in "Helen" is very like Miss Edgeworth's own manner. His

visit to Edgeworthtown was not long after the publication of the book. His description, if only for her mention of her father, is worth quoting: —

As we drove to the door Miss Edgeworth came out to meet us, a small, short, spare body of about sixty-seven, with extremely frank and kind manners, but who always looks straight into your face with a pair of mild deep grey eyes whenever she speaks to you. With characteristic directness she did not take us into the library until she had told us that we should find there Mrs. Alison, of Edinburgh, and her aunt, Miss Sneyd, a person very old and infirm, and that the only other persons constituting the family were Mrs. Edgeworth, Miss Honora Edgeworth, and Dr. Alison, a physician. . . . Miss Edgeworth's conversation was always ready, as full of vivacity and variety as I can imagine. . . . She was disposed to defend everybody, even Lady Morgan, as far as she could. And in her intercourse with her family she was quite delightful, referring constantly to Mrs. Edgeworth, who seems to be the authority in all matters of fact, and most kindly repeating jokes to her infirm aunt, Miss Sneyd, who cannot hear them, and who seems to have for her the most unbounded affection and admiration. . . . About herself as an author she seems to have no reserve or secrets. She spoke with great kindness and pleasure of a letter I brought to her from Mr. Peabody, explaining some passage in his review of "Helen" which had troubled her from its allusion to her father. "But," she added, "no one can know what I owe to my father. He advised and directed me in everything. I never could have done anything without him. There are things I cannot be mistaken about, though other people can. I know them." As she said this the tears stood in her eyes, and her whole person was moved. . . . It was, therefore, something of a trial to talk so brilliantly and variously as she did from nine in the morning to past eleven at night.

She was unfeignedly glad to see good company. Here is her account of another visitor: —

Sept. 26. — The day before yesterday we were amusing ourselves by telling who among literary and scientific people we should wish to come here next. Francis said Coleridge; I said Herschell. Yesterday morning, as I was returning from my morning walk at half past eight, I saw a bonnetless maid in the walk, with a letter in her hand, in search of me. When I opened the letter I found it was from Mr. Herschell, and that he was waiting for an answer at Mr. Briggs's inn. I have seldom been so agreeably surprised, and now that he is gone and that he has spent twenty-four hours here, if the fairy were to ask me the question again I should still more eagerly say, "Mr. Herschall, ma'am, if you please."

She still came over to England from

time to time, visiting at her sisters' houses. Honora was now Lady Beaufort; another sister, Fanny, the object of her closest and most tender affection, was Mrs. Lestock Wilson. Age brought no change in her mode of life. Time passes with tranquil steps, for her not hasting unduly. "I am perfect," she writes at the age of seventy-three to her stepmother of seventy-two, "so no more about it, and thank you from my heart and every component part of my precious self for all the care, and successful care, you have taken of me, your old petted nursing."

Alas! it is sad to realize that quite late in life fresh sorrows fell upon this warm-hearted woman. Troubles gather; young sisters fade away in their beauty and happiness. But in sad times and good times the old home is still unchanged, and remains for those that are left to turn to for shelter, for help and consolation. To the very last Miss Edgeworth kept up her reading, her correspondence, her energy. All along we have heard of her active habits — out in the early morning in her garden, coming in to the nine o'clock breakfast with her hands full of roses, sitting by and talking and reading her letters while the others ate. Her last letter to her old friend Sir Henry Holland was after reading the first volume of Lord Macaulay's history. Sir Henry took the letter to Lord Macaulay, who was so much struck by its discrimination that he asked leave to keep it.

She was now eighty-two years of age, and we find her laughing kindly at the anxiety of her sister and brother-in-law, who had heard of her climbing a ladder to wind up an old clock at Edgeworthstown. "I am heartily obliged and delighted by your being such a goose and Richard such a gander," she says, "as to be frightened out of your wits by my climbing a ladder to take off the top of the clock." She had not felt that there was anything to fear as once again she set the time that was so nearly at an end for her. Her share of life's hours had been well spent and well enjoyed; with a peaceful and steady hand and tranquil heart she might mark the dial for others whose hours were still to come.

Mrs. Edgeworth's own words tell all that remains to be told.

It was on the morning of May 22, 1849, that she was taken suddenly ill with pain in the region of the heart, and after a few hours breathed her last in my arms. She had always wished to die quickly, at home, and that I

should be with her. All her wishes were fulfilled. She was gone, and nothing like her again can we see in this world.

From The Argosy.

THE CURE'S SISTER.

BY F. E. M. NOTLEY, AUTHOR OF
"OLIVE VARCOE."

VI.

THE story Monsieur de St. Erme told me was one of youth, of passion, of sorrow. It was one of those love-affairs, which never could happen in England, and which it is just to say rarely occur among our Continental neighbors. The families of De la Roche and St. Erme, being within three leagues of each other, and having therefore an hereditary feud and jealousy to keep up, suddenly agreed to sink these agreeable feelings in an alliance between the son and daughter of their respective houses. The young people were *fiancés*, and the old folks being very hot in their new friendship, allowed them to be more together than is usually permitted by French and Belgian etiquette. All was going on as smoothly as haymaking on a sunny day, when the family feud burst forth again with a violence unknown since the Middle Ages, and the intended marriage was instantly broken off, with sarcasm and bitterness on both sides. But, unfortunately, Léon de St. Erme and Clarice de la Roche loved each other. They met secretly, and after much suffering, much debate, and many vain prayers to obdurate parents, the lovers agreed to elope. Now a French elopement in nothing resembles an English one; because it cannot end in marriage without the consent of parents. It is, therefore, undertaken in a species of despair, in order, by the ruin of the girl's reputation, to wring from the irritated relatives their consent to an immediate union. The French marriage law precludes all possibility of marriage without the consent of parents or guardians.

But in this unhappy elopement things did not settle themselves as Lionel de St. Erme had dared to hope. His father and the father of Clarice met, and words became so high and bitter between them, that a duel followed. They crossed the frontier into France and here Monsieur de la Roche, maddened by the misery of his daughter, shot his antagonist dead. Then hurrying on to Paris, to the address the wretched Clarice had given him, he

tore his girl from her lover, and returned home a broken-hearted man.

Léon de St. Erme, in the midst of his anguish, did his best to save Clarice's name, and, strange to say, his family seconded him; and though these efforts were not very successful, yet the secrecy and silence of the elopement were never so completely broken through, as to enable the Belgian Mrs. Grundy to say positively that it had taken place.

The St. Erme family did not prosecute Monsieur de la Roche for the duel; they felt, perhaps, that things were tolerably balanced between them, and the dishonor beneath which he was sinking, counterpoised the bereavement from which they suffered. Still Madame de St. Erme would not permit the name of De la Roche to be mentioned in her hearing; and Lionel felt that while his mother lived, and while the memory of this duel lived, a marriage between him and Clarice would be impossible. With great difficulty he conveyed to her a heart-breaking letter of farewell, and then, with his widowed mother, he departed for the south of France, where her family resided. All who know the deference and affection given by men of French race to their mothers, will understand the feelings and conduct of Lionel. He could fulfil his duty towards her, while he could do nothing for Clarice save bewail her. It was more than a year before he returned for a short visit to the Château of St. Erme; then his cautious inquiries only elicited the fact that she lived in strict seclusion, as Monsieur and Madame de la Roche had ceased to see any company whatever. But Clarice heard that he was at St. Erme, and one day the curé, a man already stepping into the vale of years, accosted him, and drew from his pocket a letter.

"I look upon it as my duty to give you this," said the curé. "I am the confessor of this unhappy young lady, and I make myself the bearer of this, to satisfy her conscience and my own. At some future day you may wish to acknowledge or adopt your child, so you shall not, for her sake, be kept ignorant of its birth."

Overwhelmed with a mingled feeling of pain, joy, and grief, Lionel de St. Erme tore open the letter. It was worded stiffly, for the curé would not be the bearer of warmer words; nevertheless the deep suffering of the writer broke through the thin disguise, and tears fell on the paper, as the young man read that he had a daughter, of whom the unhappy mother

could tell him nothing, except that the infant had been conveyed away in great secrecy, and the sole concession her parents had made to her prayer, was to promise that it should be named Léonie.

On receiving this intelligence, Lionel de St. Erme came to the firm resolve that he would one day give his *wife* — as he now termed Clarice in his heart — a legal right to that name, and then he would find his child and acknowledge her.

Anxious as he was to do his duty by his child, his fears, and his love for Clarice, kept him silent and inert. His duty to his mother also interfered. Could he seek an interview with the slayer of his father, or ask his pity or grasp his hand? The idea was too frightful; he felt that his indignation and despair would burst all bonds, and he should break his mother's heart, without hope of altering Clarice's position towards himself. Hence, after vainly striving to convey to her an assurance of his affection, he once more quitted the Ardennes. And perhaps this time as he departed, his bitterest thought was that his child was in the hands of his enemies. Yet, gloomy and reckless as he was, life had not for him the dreary, maddening monotony that it had for Clarice de la Roche. Shut up in an old château, debarred from all companionship, with a mother perishing with ennui, and a father whose soured and broken spirit was a constant reproach to her heart, she longed only to die. But after two years of this life, an escape was offered to her. An old companion-in-arms — a man who had gone through the Russian campaign and the "Hundred Days" by the side of Monsieur de la Roche, paid him a sudden visit. He was sixty years of age, and a widower, with daughters long since married, and a young son born to him late, whose birth had cost his mother's life. To this man, who had been his friend so many years, Monsieur de la Roche confided his grief, and the Comte de Villet pitied him, but pitied Clarice more.

"You speak of putting her in a convent," he said, "give her to me instead, and I will both love her and respect her."

On this proposition being made to Clarice, she declared her willingness to accept it, if she might have her daughter.

"Your child is dead," said her father. He left her without deigning any explanation, and finally it was her mother's tears that prevailed on her to accept the Count de Villet. Madame de la Roche could return to the world with a daughter, who was the Countess de Villet, but never

with an unmarried daughter over whose name there was a shadow.

The marriage took place, and not until he was her husband did Clarice understand the chivalry, the delicacy, and tenderness of the man who had given her the shield of his name. "My dear child," he said, "you are twenty, I am sixty. You have gained a father, I a daughter whom the world will call madame, and respect. In return, I only ask that you will so honor the name I have given you, that during my life you enter into no communication with Monsieur de St. Erme."

Clarice, with tears, promised obedience to this wish. But on hearing of her marriage Léon went to Africa, and for five years those two were as dead to each other; at the end of that period Monsieur de la Roche died; and then he addressed a letter to her privately, asking after the welfare of his child. She put the letter in her husband's hands, and he replied to Léon shortly but courteously, that the infant was dead. Thus affairs stood for nine years longer, then, on her deathbed, Madame de la Roche confessed to her daughter that the young Léonie lived. She had been placed at a well-known foundling hospital in the Ardennes, and the dying woman drew from beneath her pillow a small locket portfolio, from which she took the ticket which gave the child's number.

"I pinned her name, 'Léonie,' on her bosom," said the countess; "and a short time since I knew she was living under the care of Farmer Valmine's widow. The curé of St. Erme can tell you more. I have released him from the seal of confession, and implored him to state to you all he has heard from me of Léonie. Forgive me, Clarice. Now I am going to die I cannot carry out your father's cruel decree, that the existence of this child of the hateful St. Erme's should never be made known to its mother."

Clarice heard this confession with a mingled frenzy of joy, pain, and forgiveness; and, after the countess's death, she hastened to put herself in communication with the curé of St. Erme; and through him a letter — giving no names — was placed in Léonie's hands from her unknown mother.

The girl received it coldly. She loved Madame Valmine, she said. She loved her own home, and had no wish to leave it. She had been brought up to work, and did not know how to be a lady.

This answer threw her wretched mother into despair; and she had no one to ad-

vise with, for Monsieur de Villet, now very old, was paralyzed, and his mind was gone. For a year he lingered thus, then died, and Clarice de Roche in her distress now felt herself free to appeal to her former lover for help and counsel.

All the obstinate hearts, the proud faces that had stood against their union, were dust now; but their young hopes, their young passionate love, was dead also, and there stood between them a gap of eighteen dreary years, which no future time could ever fill up. These years which, if spent together, would have knit their hearts as one — each day, like a link, binding them in mutual memories of joys and sorrows — made now a sorrowful barrier, over which they looked in each others changed faces, and *philosophized*! Still, Léon was touched when he found how true to him his old love had been, and the thought of his daughter filled his heart with strange yearnings. He and Clarice married, and this marriage transformed Léonie the foundling into Mademoiselle de St. Erme, the heiress of that house, and of the still more ancient house of De la Roche.

But during her year of widowhood, as during the year of the Comte de Villet's sickness, Clarice had beaten against Léonie's heart in vain. There was no entrance there for her. The girl obstinately refused to be acknowledged; refused to quit her foster-family, or to accept any relations but them. That great fear in the French mind — the fear of scandal — had made Madame de St. Erme utter her pleadings secretly, through the curé of St. Erme, or through letters placed in the shell of the old fountain; but now that she was married, she and her husband were feverishly anxious to claim their daughter.

But to do this by force of law and not of nature, was an idea most painful to the unhappy mother. An appeal to law would rip up all the sorrowful story of her youth, and the decree that gave her her daughter could not give also her daughter's heart. So she came to St. Erme, and in many an interview strove to shake Léonie's resolution, and win her love.

Alas! she beat against a rock.

"I do not care for the luxuries you offer me," said the girl. "To gain them I have to forsake those who have loved me ever since I was born. It is with them I have had a home, with them I have found a mother and a brother. I will not desert them to be rich and a lady; and as for love, *new* love wearies me, it falls upon

my heart as an unknown tongue does upon my ear — there is no answer to it in my soul."

"Thus," said the count to me, "did this strange girl reply to our pleadings; and still unwilling to force her to come to our roof by a legal process, I thought of trying how the offer of a rich alliance would affect her. I spoke to her of the young Comte de Villet, who had seen and admired her. She listened to me at first in passionate contempt — a contempt which has changed lately to a fixed eagerness."

"And will she marry him?" I cried.

"I think so," returned the count. "Her mother, who is much attached to young De Villet, is most anxious for this alliance. And though I will not hurt her maternal love by saying so, I believe it is Léonie's attachment to him which has at last brought her to our arms."

I mused a moment in silence, not daring to utter what I thought; then I asked if the Comte de Villet loved Léonie.

Monsieur de St. Erme sighed deeply.

"I scarcely know," he said. "Remember the difference between Léonie's rearing and his; how can he have any sympathy with one brought up without any of the refinements of birth, education, and wealth?"

"But Léonie has genius," I answered; "and genius is above the accidents of birth and fortune."

"Yes," sighed the count; "it may be so; nevertheless, it takes a great soul to recognize genius, and I fear my son-in-law elect sees only that Léonie is the heiress to the lands of St. Erme and De la Roche."

I went home musingly, stricken with sad forebodings.

VII.

"I THOUGHT she would have told us herself," said the curé. "I would never have believed that Léonie would have left it to another to tell us such a tale as this."

"And how could she go without a leaving-taking?" cried Madame Valmine, weeping. "Gabriel and I have always loved her so dearly! Surely it is bitter to part without a word. The mother who was ashamed of her, the noble friends who forsook her, will never love her as we do."

I had my own thoughts, but I buried them in pitiful silence, and a thousand pleadings should not have torn them from my soul. So I let them blame Léonie, and I did *not* say: "The girl has done

this for your sake, and her heart is breaking."

The curé was very pale, and his eyes, as he looked at me, were full of keen reproach.

"Is this Léonie's own doing?" he asked. "I fancied her heart was generous and noble. I did not think that hers was a spirit to be blinded by sudden wealth. Alas! for the deceitfulness of riches!"

He turned away his head to hide from me his emotion, but I saw the quiver of his lip, and the shadow of pain on his brow.

"Can the love of so many years be forgotten in a day?" cried Madame Valmine, wringing her hands passionately. "Can a child be so ungrateful? Oh, Léonie! Léonie!"

I was roused now into taking her part.

"Why do you *both* mistake her?" I said angrily. "She loves you — she is dying of grief — she leaves you only for the sake of a holy duty. Do you know that her mother — her *own* mother, has knocked in vain at the door of her heart, these two years past? And she has borne her anguish in bitter silence, never grieving you by a word. Which would she have chosen if she could? — this poor cottage, or yon stately château? Remember that for two years, of her own free choice, she has stayed beneath this lowly roof, brightening it with her presence, when she should have gladdened her mother's home. Whose tears has she wiped away? — yours or hers? For whom has she spun and toiled? For whom has she sung and smiled? Was it not for you, and not for that sorrowful, lonely lady yonder, who would have given all her wealth for one of her child's smiles and kisses — lavished daily upon you?"

"True, true," said the curé. "Mother, we are wrong; we are unreasonable. Léonie does but her duty in obeying her parents."

"But without a farewell," sobbed Madame Valmine. "Why leave me without a farewell? I could bear the parting, if she had fallen on my neck and kissed me before she went."

"And had she not a reason?" I cried warmly. "Can you not believe, that she who has been generous all her life long is most generous now, when she leaves you abruptly without a word or a kiss? I tell you she is in the straight and thorny path; and may God comfort her in it! May some angel take her by the hand, and lead her away from her own despair."

I erred in saying so much, and I repented as I saw the surprise on Madame Valmine's honest face, and the startled look in the good curé's eyes.

"Not despair!" he said gently. "They will let her see us often; we shall not be parted."

How could I tell him that Léonie meant never to see his face again? I was silent.

"No," he continued, "the parting is but nominal: we shall meet so often. And when Léonie gets used to her new position she will be happy. You too, mother, will be proud to see her a great lady; you will be pleased when this little child of your adoption comes to you in jewels and silks, and calls you mother. For she will do this always. Ah! I feel Léonie is unchanged in heart."

I believe he said this partly to soothe his mother, and partly to cheat himself with a fair dream, which he knew could never come to pass.

The founding Léonie was their own — their very own — but Mademoiselle de St. Erme could never belong to them again. Nevertheless, I would not utter even a sigh to check their visions; and as they grew in brightness, Madame Valmine's sorrow diminished, till at last she broke into smiles and joyful anticipations for the future.

When I left them, late in the evening, they were still full of wonder, and I had not said a word about the coming marriage!

"I cannot do it," I said to myself, as I walked homewards. "Let him hear it from other lips. I, who have seen Léonie's anguish, dread now the sight of a tortured heart."

When the day came for my dinner at the château, I confess I rode thither with feelings of intense curiosity, being most anxious to see how Léonie bore this great change in her position, and the terrible parting that had so shaken her soul.

She was sitting alone when I entered the drawing-room, and I was startled to see the girl's face. It was white as snow, save for the dark veins round the eyes, which showed she had wept much. She was robed in white, her black hair being beautifully wreathed with pearls, but these and the whiteness of her dress, did but increase her paleness. Moreover, unlike a heroine of romance, Léonie looked ill at ease in her rich toilette; and graceful as was her shape naturally, the unaccustomed apparel took from it her native charm, without giving her the acquired elegance of fashion.

She held her hand towards me, with a wistful smile.

"Say nothing to me of *them*," she murmured, "or my courage will fail."

I obeyed her, and throughout that stately dinner no one would have guessed from Léonie's manner that her heart was a very volcano, in which lay a fire terrible and withering in its strength.

At the dessert, Monsieur de St. Erme, in a few graceful words, alluded to the approaching marriage between the young count and his daughter, and he then invited all the guests to a ball to be given that day fortnight, when the marriage contract would be signed. The fashion was then just beginning to hold the ball on this occasion, rather than on the wedding-day, which had ever been the custom till lately. The marriage, the count told us, would take place on the morning after the ball, and many of the guests would therefore remain that night at the château. I was among those to whom this hospitality was offered.

Léonie never blushed or faltered as her marriage was spoken of; and though on her pale cheeks there now glowed a spot of burning red, it was more like the hectic of pain than the flush of joy. I watched the young count, and saw that, if once indifferent to his bride, he was no longer so now. Evidently during the week he had spent in Léonie's society, she had roused his interest and curiosity, and planted in his heart the germ of a true affection. The subtle power of her genius and her passion had awoken the fire of his own soul, and he was ready to become her slave if she would. She did not see it, she did not know it. Simple, and unconscious, she ever seemed unaware of the might of that attraction which, like a charmed circle, drew towards her all those who came within the magnetism of her presence.

Late in the evening, Madame de St. Erme found an opportunity to speak to me unheard by the crowd. Unlike a great lady, ordinarily, she was nervous and excited.

"Léonie is new to all this," she said; "how do you think she bears it?"

"Quietly," I answered.

"Ah, yes, too quietly! She is always as you see her now, a statue of stone. There is something unnatural in this extreme calm in a young girl."

And are you too deceived, I thought, by this peace of the earthquake and the hurricane? How strange that this girl, who makes every one *feel* her passion and

her strength, can yet force them to deny it, and believe her calm!

"I doubt if Léonie is not greatly troubled in spirit," I said. "Her calm is only outward."

"I think not," replied Madame de St. Erme. "You know with what reluctance she came to me, with what seeming grief she quitted her foster-family. Well—will you believe it?—she has not asked for them since, and although I have been to see them so often, she has each time refused to accompany me. Can she be coldhearted?"

I could have smiled at the question, but I was too sorrowful. I felt like one who walks amid a smouldering fire, which may burst forth and overwhelm him.

"Do not think her cold," I said earnestly, "lest you fall into some error which may grieve you."

"Alas! she is cold to me! I shall never win her love," said madame.

"Have patience," I answered. "Can she root up old affections in a week?"

"You ever strive to comfort me," returned the lady gratefully. "But you see, I am losing my jealousy of her foster-mother, and I am even disappointed that she has grown indifferent so soon. I dread to see her new wealth develop hardness or ingratitude in her character."

"Does Madame Valmine think her ungrateful?" I asked.

"I fear so. And although I have sent her flowers and fruit every day in Léonie's name, and although I have made for her every possible excuse, I can see both she and the curé are deeply hurt at her persistent absence. The poor woman wept yesterday, and flung the gift I brought her to the ground. 'I want none of your gifts,' she said, 'I want a sight of Léonie's face, a loving word from her lips—it is for this I pine. We are very sad here, madame—my son and I; you have taken from us the light of our home. Léonie was my daughter and Gabriel's sister for twenty years.'

"Her words smote me to the heart," continued Madame de St. Erme; "and I promised Léonie should come to see her to-day; but I promised vainly. 'I cannot go,' she said to me in her quiet way. 'I can never see their faces again.'"

"They know of the coming marriage?" said I anxiously.

"Yes," she answered; "I told them of it yesterday."

"And what did they say?" I cried.

"Madame Valmine sent Léonie her blessing, but her son said nothing. He

seems a reserved and silent man, that young curé," observed madame.

I held my peace, half in sorrow, half in fear. And soon after this I took my leave, uttering no word to Léonie that could disturb the coldness of her aspect.

VIII.

ALL the village talk was of the grand wedding at the château. "Think of our little Léonie being Madame la Comtesse," said the peasants. "It's like a fairy tale. How happy she will be! And he is handsome as the day, that young count. The wedding will be the grandest fête ever seen!" Thus the spectators talked, while the actors in the drama hid their aching hearts beneath their tinsel of rank and wealth.

I was at the curé's house on the night before the great day. Madame Valmine was tearful and excited, the curé calm and quiet.

"I am to go to the château to-morrow," said Madame Valmine. "The countess sends a carriage for me. Ah! she is goodness itself. I cannot believe it is her fault that Léonie is so cruel."

"Mademoiselle de St. Erme is right in not returning to this house," observed the curé. "She understands her position too well; she perceives the truth, that we are parted forever. It will but grieve her to see you to-morrow, mother."

"How can you talk thus of your sister?" exclaimed Madame Valmine.

A slight flush rose to the curé's brow. "I cannot call myself the brother of Mademoiselle de St. Erme," he said. "Léonie the foundling, might be my sister, but not the Countess de Villet."

As I listened to him I wondered; and yet I ought not to have marvelled at the sorrowful peace about the man; for he had that in his face, which showed he had wrestled in prayer and fasting, and the drop of gall that had rankled in his heart was wrung out.

"Do you go with your mother to-morrow?" I asked him, laying my hand upon his shoulder.

"Do you not know," he answered, "that a priest is never invited to a wedding?"

There was something in his mournful voice that rang through my very soul. I had forgotten that I was speaking to a priest—a man cut off from fellowship with human ties—and I felt angry with myself for my blunder.

"Ah! forgive me," I said, seizing his hand. "How I wish you were a Protes-

tant!" As I spoke, a whole romance flitted before me, and I beheld happiness where now I saw despair.

But the curé flushed angrily. "Of what are you talking?" he said hastily. "Heresy has no charm for me."

Ashamed of my second blunder, I faltered forth some excuse, and then turned to listen to Madame Valmine's long description of Léonie's trousseau.

Going homewards that night, as the clock chimed eleven, there passed me, in the darkness, like the face of a troubled spirit, the white face of Léonie de St. Erme. Her eyes wildly distended, were fixed with such haggard woe on the light in the window of her cottage home, that she neither heard nor saw my quiet figure. So I turned silently and watched her. With head bent forward, in eager longing, she walked on hurriedly, till she reached the shadow of a high wall, just opposite the cottage. Here she rested, and with her eyes fixed upon her home, she stood like a statue, till the light in the little window died out. Only once she moved, shrinking against the wall, and hiding her face in her dark mantle; this was when Gabriel Valmine stood for a moment at his window, looking upwards, like a man who prays. When all was silent, and the house quite dark, Léonie crept forward, and, kneeling down, she pressed her lips on the threshold of the door. From my ambush where I stood, I heard her stifled sobs, and, had I been a woman, I would have wept also.

It was nearly midnight when the girl arose, and stole away like a shadow.

I looked after her wistfully, but I would not follow her, or offer her my protection.

"She came hither safely," I said; "she will return safely. God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

Poor Léonie! she came through night and darkness to pray for them, and to kiss the threshold of their door, and her foster-mother thought her cruel!

The marriage contract, which gave the young pair a noble dowry, lay on the table in the great hall. The Comte de Villet, with a flush of youthful joy on his cheek, signed first, then the Count de St. Erme led his daughter to the table, and her bridegroom, with an eager look in his eyes, handed her the pen. It was at this instant I scanned Léonie, with an anxious glance, and felt reassured. I had never seen her more calm, or more beautiful. Her bridal attire of pure white, her wreath of orange flowers and wild white rose, her

long veil of snowy lace, suited her strange style of beauty, and I thought for a moment I saw before me a sibyl, a vestal, or a priestess of some wild, dead faith.

She took the pen with an unflinching hand, and, raising her large dark eyes to her father's face, she smiled. Oh, how I blessed her for that smile, which lifted from my heart a cloud of fear and sorrow!

Another instant, and her firm signature was affixed to the document, which pledged her to be the young count's wife. As her fingers dropped the pen, I saw a quivering paleness gather about her lips, and I felt in my own heart the shadow of the pang in hers. But she conquered, and turned her face, with that same smile on it, towards her father, and received his kiss. Then her mother's lips touched hers, and Madame de St. Erme, with a look of ineffable joy, lifted her tearful eyes to heaven as if in praise. Next came the bridegroom, and as he stooped and saluted his bride on either cheek, that paleness about her lips grew ashy white, and, as her eyes drooped, I saw tears gather on the lashes. A crowd came round her now, and hid her from my sight, and just at this instant, Madame de St. Erme's trembling hand touched my arm.

"I have prepared a happy surprise for Léonie, to-day," she whispered to me. "I have reason to think that she refused to see Madame Valmine for fear of wounding me, so I have sent for her foster-mother, and I mean to give her at table the place of honor, next the bride."

I had no time to say that I thought this would be a dangerous trial for Léonie, for the company, sweeping on towards the doorway, separated me from the countess. The throng pressed on to the grand saloon, where a sort of dais was erected, on which stood two fauteuils, for the bride and bridegroom. Here they were to sit to receive the congratulations of the guests, and Léonie, still calm and stately, took her seat, so unmoved, that I could scarcely believe that this was the same girl, whose wild, white face had passed me in the night, like a vision.

But now the crowd moved suddenly to right and left, and I saw Madame Valmine leaning on the arm of Madame de St. Erme, and I heard the latter's voice, saying softly,—

"Léonie, both your mothers are here to-day to give you their blessing."

What passed next was like a dream, a flash of some strange vision instantly

withdrawn: for I saw Léonie dash down the steps of the dais, and with a loud cry fall at Madame Valmine's feet.

"Take me home!" she shrieked wildly, "I cannot bear this gilded misery. Mother! mother! I feel I am going mad!"

The scene of confusion that ensued was indescribable. Madame de St. Erme fainted, and was carried out, with a look on her dead white face that haunted me for years.

But oh, the wild, wild woe in Léonie's eyes, as, dragging her foster-mother with her up the dais, her face rose before me like the face of despair I had seen flitting by in the starlight, when it stooped to kiss the threshold of Gabriel Valmine's door.

"Why have you come hither, mother?" she cried, with her arms on high. "I was doing my duty, I was acting my part bravely; now you have smitten me again to the dust." Then giving way to the passionate impulses of her nature, she flung herself on her knees, and with her bridal veil trailing on the ground, and her cheeks tear-stained, she stretched out her arms towards her father and her pale bridegroom. "Forgive me," she said, "I am but a poor peasant-girl; you may call me countess, and deck me in satin and pearls, but I tell you"—and her voice rose, and she laid her hand upon her heart—"the peasant-girl is *here*, and here too is her love, her love for those—O God, forgive me! what am I saying? Pardon me, father, I will do all you wish. Take her away; take his mother out of my sight, lest I die of grief. Monsieur de Villet, if you will have a sorrowful woman for your wife—a poor, unlettered girl, who will always be a peasant at heart, and whose very soul is on fire beneath the scorching of a great sin, then I am yours, and I will try to make you a good wife. And may the saints and the Holy Virgin help me!" Poor Léonie! poor untaught, foolish Léonie! she spoke from her heart, and she thought to touch theirs, being ignorant that fashion shapes her votaries into fishes, all dumb, all of one shape and pattern, and any cry coming from the soul is hated, and branded as a scene.

Ashamed and angry, the young count turned away his crimsoned face from the prayerful eyes of Léonie, and stooping, he whispered to Monsieur de St. Erme, "Get that ridiculous peasant-woman out of the way! It is she who has done this."

But Léonie's father answered him with only a troubled look, and descending among the crowd himself, the bridegroom

seized the weeping Madame Valmine roughly by the arm, and led her to the door, uttering in her ear rapid words of scorn and anger. With straining eyes Léonie watched this scene, her senses seemingly bewildered by a strange horror, but as her frightened foster-mother, at the doorway, looked back upon her reproachfully, she dashed forward, parting the crowd on either side by her vehemence, and reaching her, she clasped her in her arms and kissed her.

"You see," she said bitterly, "you have no part in me now; we are separated forever. But kiss me, and bless me, before you go, mother."

But Madame Valmine was crazed with vexation, shame, and disappointment, so she answered angrily,—

"You want no blessing of mine, made-moiselle. I wish you joy of your fine jewels and clothes, and your fine husband the count."

"See this woman off the premises!" cried the exasperated bridegroom to his servants. "This insolence is past bearing."

Two men laid their hands on Madame Valmine, and pushed her through the great doors of the hall. It was an act done in anger—done in a moment, but it broke Léonie's heart, and its consequence went on into eternity.

Hard as turning of Madame Valmine from the door might be, it yet seemed a measure of necessity, and all breathed more freely when she was gone. All but Léonie, and she stood like a statue of stone, with eyes dilated and hands clasped upon her brow. Then, as the Count de Villet turned with profuse apologies to his guests, I drew near to her and touched her on the arm. "Léonie," I whispered, "remember your promise to me at the fountain. A worse sorrow than this might fall on your foster-mother through you. For her sake you must bear this."

Such a look as Medea had when she slew her children, Léonie turned on me, and my blood coursed to my heart like a river, as I bent to hear her words.

"I take heaven and you to witness," said Léonie, "that when they thrust my mother forth, I would have gone with her hand-in-hand, and I would have sprinkled the dust from my feet as I left this place; but I know there is a curse upon me, and I dare not bring its blight upon her and hers. No, I could not follow her to-day—their home can never be my home again; but you, who know the truth, will say for me, that for their sakes I forsake

them. Oh, I have courage to save her and him—believe me. You shall see I have!”

Her face shone as she spoke, like the face of one of those women of old, who have died from some noble mistake of duty; and walking rapidly through the parting crowd, she mounted the dais where her father still stood, and taking his hand she kissed it. “Father,” she said wistfully, “do not grieve for my roughness and my faults; you shall see the noble blood is in me, hidden though it be by my peasant culture.”

In all his life, I doubt if the count had ever sorrowed for the passion and the disobedience of his youth as he did now. But his tongue faltered, and he could not speak, as he held his child tightly by her small hand, and gazed into her face.

“Friends,” said Léonie, in that wonderfully clear voice of hers, “you know my history, and knowing it you will pardon me, that unlike a lady—for I am not taught like you—I gave way to my own feelings to-day instead of considering yours. Forgive me! I know so little. My world has been so small, that until lately my heart has held all my universe.”

She curtsied low, and clung to her father with both hands, overcome with a sudden timidity, being startled, as it were, by her own courage in speaking. Her apology was so humble, her manner and appearance so graceful, yet so unlike the conventional pattern to which the world is used, that all were charmed by the very singularity of her wild outburst and gentle defence; and, had fashion allowed it, all hands would have clapped her, as her clear accents ceased. The young count's wounded vanity was smoothed again, and he cried out cheerfully,—

“Let us begin the ball! I will go and fetch my mother.”

When Madame de St. Erme reappeared, her eyes were swelled and reddened; but seeing her daughter so calm again, she rallied, and the ball passed off with fitting spirit.

Never was Léonie so attentive to her mother as on this night; but I observed that when the dance with the bridegroom, which etiquette required, was over, she avoided him, and her face paled even at the sound of his voice.

Balls are early in the Ardennes, and it was not much past midnight when the carriages drove away, leaving in the château myself and a few other guests, who were to be present next morning at the marriage ceremony.

Léonie went to rest early. Her mother's arm was round her, and they both smiled.

“Good-night,” said madame.

“Farewell!” said Léonie, and putting out her hand, she touched mine, and I found a note in my palm. Looking at it, when alone in my room, I read on the envelope, “Do not open this until to-morrow, when I am gone.”

“It is some message for *them*, to be given when she has departed with her husband,” I said to myself; and, respecting her wish, I placed the letter in my pocket-book.

IX.

WHAT was it awoke me in the morning? It was a sense of suffocation—a great horror—a feeling like the touch of a dead hand upon my face—and, starting up, I trembled, asking myself what had happened. But beyond the distant sound of servants busy with their work, all in the château was still; so, flinging off the chill that lay upon me, I dressed, and sauntered into the garden. I went down to the fountain, and thought how strangely fitting an emblem it was of Léonie's withered life, and Madame de St. Erme's barren and wasted youth. But as I mused, a piercing shriek rose up to the morning sky, and filled with terror at the sound, I rushed back to the house.

I met haggard faces and cries of woe on every side.

“She is dead! She is dead!” they whispered to each other.

Scarcely knowing what I did, I followed the throng, and found myself at the threshold of Léonie's chamber. The door had been burst open, and the fumes of charcoal filled the air.

Léonie lay on her bed, dressed as I had seen her the night before, but she was dead, and the white veil and wreath above her pale face, looked a ghastly mockery.

Madame de St. Erme knelt by the bedside, convulsed with grief, the count and her stepson leaning over her. The bridegroom's face was white as his dead bride's, but he uttered no word either of sorrow or of comfort; so not a sound broke the stillness of death in that chamber, save the low sobs of women.

A pan of charcoal, still glowing with white heat, stood on the closed stove. There was no need to ask questions; this told me all. And, sick at heart, I went back to my room and read Léonie's letter.

“DEAR FRIEND,—You have known

me three years, and you, and you only, have guessed my secret. You are a Protestant. To you it will not seem so terrible, so wicked, that I, who know all his goodness, should love him. In your eyes my sin is not sacrilege, not past repentance, as it would seem to *him* and to his mother; therefore it is, that I do not shrink from letting you see this blot in my soul. But spare me in their memory; do not let them pluck me out of their hearts, as one who lived among them as a leper, hiding her leprosy. Through what anguish and bitterness I have hidden my wicked love from their sight, my own soul alone can say. But I was very content, very happy as his sister; no thought that I loved him better than a sister startled me, till my real mother told me of my birth. Then I felt more clearly that I was not his sister, and foreseeing that we should be separated by a thousand barriers that rank and wealth make, I endured such torture that my heart awoke to the truth. To be parted forever; to see his face no more; to be neither sister nor friend to him, but a stranger; this is what the future offered me, and I rebelled against it. I clung to my cottage home, as we cling to life. But all things were a torture to me now. Oh, if my mother had left me in blindness, I should have lived on peacefully as his sister to the end; but now that I *knew* the terrible secret of my own heart, I was ever at war with myself. At last I felt that I ought to spare them the sorrow of my presence, and about this time my father offered me a noble husband—a man whom once my wildest dreams would not have fixed on, and in this I thought I saw a means offered me by heaven to save them from my grief. You strengthened me in this thought, and I thank you for it.

"I believed I could marry the count, and live for him and my parents; but I cannot—I cannot. My whole soul rises against him in terror and loathing, when I tell myself I am his wife. Yet, until to-day, my courage never failed me; but to-day I saw him strike my mother—Gabriel's mother—and I feel I would choose strangling rather than clasp his hand. A good man I might have learned to love, but a mean and cruel heart I despise. So I choose death, because there is no other way now to escape. With the sound of the music in my ears, I have thought and thought, till my brain seemed on fire, and I saw no way of flight but this—no refuge but the grave.

"Ask them to forgive me—my father

and mother, I mean. I would have lived for them if I could; but it is better to die than to sin; it is better to die than to live in despair and hatred.

"Let the true secret of my sorrow die with me, so there may be no shame—no pain in the tears which my foster mother and brother will shed upon the grave of Léonie. Yet tell him to pray for me—to pray for me always while he lives.

"I have written a line of farewell to my mother and father, so no necessity will be laid on you to speak of this letter to them. Oh, have pity on me, and do not betray to their contempt and loathing the tortured heart of

"LEONIE DE ST. ERME."

It was too late to be angry with the careless security, which had made me leave this letter unopened, but it was not too late to respect the wishes of a broken heart.

I kept her secret.

Poor Léonie! I had not, as she imagined, guessed it, till the meaning of her own incoherent words at the fountain came to my mind, after I had left her at the château.

Gabriel Valmine was present at her funeral, and I know it was his hand which sowed for many years on her grave, in the little blue flowers she loved, her name—Léonie.

I gave him her message.

"I should have prayed for her without it," he answered softly. And I know he fulfilled his word, for a year afterwards I saw written on many pages of his mass-book and his psalter the words "Pray for Léonie!"

In the cemetery of that little village in the Ardennes, where Gabriel Valmine was curé, the pious priest now lies at rest, and on his tombstone there is carved neither his name, his age, nor his virtues, but those same simple words,—

"Pray for Léonie!"

From The Cornhill Magazine.

THE DECAY OF LITERATURE.

A DISTINGUISHED French writer not long ago uttered a lamentation over the decline of criticism. The complaint was supported by specific allegations as to the state of French literature, upon which it might be presumptuous to express a decided opinion. Yet such phenomena do not concern one country alone. Changes in the world of thought are propagated

rapidly beyond the centre of origin. The alleged causes of decay are certainly operative in England as well as in France; and if it be true that the French are producing no worthy successors to the critics of the past generation, it is time for us to ask whether we can see reason for more cheerful anticipations in England. The complaint, indeed, sounds at first sight ill-directed. We are often told that this is pre-eminently the age of criticism. It is common to allege a proclivity to criticism as some explanation of other deficiencies. In a critical age the artist is made oversensitive and forced into morbid self-consciousness by the conditions of the time. When he throws his work into a world peopled by Saturday Reviewers and swarming with contributors to periodicals eager for some new victim, he feels like the prisoner in the September massacres, who gathered strength from despair, shut his eyes, and precipitated himself into the armed sea of murderers in the street. The author may be badly off, but the critics themselves must surely be having a fine time of it. If sport with moderns should ever be slack, they can make studies of the past. They can show at once their penetration and their generous enthusiasm by exalting some genius whom his innocent contemporaries had always taken to be a fool. And then criticism has arrayed itself in some of the dignity of a science. It can discourse of phases of development, of the social organism, of differentiation and evolution, and the spirit of the age as learnedly as "sociology" itself. It ridicules the old-fashioned critic of the Rymer and John Dennis period, who was content to point out that Shakespeare often neglected the unities; and smiles at the judicious Addison, who tested "Paradise Lost" by the canons of Aristotle and the ingenious M. Bossu. Modern criticism began by an attack upon the rule of Pope, that wicked and narrow-minded person who wished that all the trees of the forest should be clipped and trimmed to suit the neat little Twickenham garden. But this was in early days, when Coleridge and Wordsworth and Lamb were assailing one tyranny only with the aim of restoring the preceding dynasty. We have now reached a wider and more cosmopolitan point of view. We can be just to Pope as well as to the Elizabethans. We are neither classicists nor romanticists, but magnificent eclectics, who assign to every man his proper place, and pronounce every literary species to be good in its kind. We survey with sci-

entific impartiality the whole field of human achievement; we ticket our specimens as belonging to the ages of iron or the mediæval period, the Renaissance, the *Aufklärung*, the Revolution, and so forth; and fill our museums with the spoils of all ages. And then, guided by the great comparative method, which has worked such wonders, we see how each development was the natural product of the race in its given environment, exalt ourselves above the petty prejudices of any particular place or time, and, ceasing to condemn or absolve in obedience to the temporary dogmatism of passing prejudices, we simply explain. Each great writer takes his proper place as one special avatar of the world-spirit; and we lay down theories firm and irrevocable as those of the physical sciences, and yet leaving full play for intelligent enthusiasm.

Indeed, in all seriousness, we may admit that criticism has of late raised its aims and improved its methods. We cannot read any modern criticism without perceiving that it rests upon investigation incomparably more minute and careful than formerly was thought necessary. If no modern writer can surpass Johnson's vigorous common sense, there is certainly no modern writer with any regard for his reputation who would dare to publish the hasty opinions and slovenly statements of fact which disfigure the "Lives of the Poets." Nor would any modern so implicitly adopt the canons of any one school and condemn every other form of art so unhesitatingly, as though indifference to its conventions was necessarily an offence against the eternal and infallible code. Our judgments are more catholic — more scientific, if you please — and rest upon a much wider induction and more minute examination of the facts. And yet do we not miss something? If we are less narrow in our principles, are we not blunter in our perceptions? Have we not lost something of the fineness of tact which belonged to men trained in a fixed tradition?

Criticism has become more scientific, but less delicate and less really sympathetic. Read, for example, M. Taine's brilliant account of English literature. It is forcible and comprehensive. It lays down broad and sound principles, and shows us the special case in its larger relations. But when we come to details we are often edified. His criticism of every particular Englishman is but a repetition of the general rule that every Englishman

is a broad, beef-eating, coarse, vigorous John Bull, who lives in a fog, and cuts his throat when he has the spleen. We see the type, but not the individual. Charles Lamb can tell us nothing about the organism and the environment, or the influence of climate upon national character. But when he speaks within his own sphere he speaks as an expert, because he speaks as a lover. He is blind, it may be, to all kinds of excellence but one. Yet, when dealing with the objects of his real sympathy, he can in a few words give us more of the true secret than is contained in volumes of ponderous German philosophy or brilliant French science. His mind is so imbued and penetrated with a certain tradition that he can interpret every inflection of the voice, catch the half-revealed touches of indirect allusion, relish the most delicate and evanescent flavor, humorous or sentimental, and, in short, respond to his author like a highly-strung instrument. The difference is as the difference between a foreigner who comes to a country village and describes the squire or parson as types of the aristocratic and ecclesiastical developments, and the native who, having never been beyond his horizon, cannot even conceive of a society without a squire and parson, but has yet penetrated the very essence of their character, and can make a shrewd guess at the text of the parson's sermon from the way in which he has tied his bands. The decay of criticism of which our French contemporary complains is due in part to this change. We have become so philosophical and so fond of wide generalizations that we have partly lost our instinct and are incapable of perceiving the individual. The criticism to which he looks back was the criticism of men who did not bother themselves about science, and did not aim at being cosmopolitan, but who, having been brought up in certain traditions—traditions which on the whole, too, represented a vast amount of clear good sense—had still spontaneous instinct enough to judge dogmatically, quickly, and with real perception of the qualities concerned.

This, I say, may be a part of the explanation, and it may go further than appears at first sight. For to say that this is the age of criticism means that it is the age of science. And it would be easy enough to take up an old text and show in how many respects the scientific is opposed to the literary impulse; how caution and circumspection take the place of unhesitating conviction; how science fos-

ters a provisional scepticism, an examination of all supposed first principles, which is fatal to the vivid utterance of any conviction; how it applies a chilling "if" to all the imagery in which some conditional belief is necessary even for the artist who takes it to symbolize his creations; how a period in which we are prying into the roots of all traditional creeds is not a period in which they will bear the blossom of poetical embodiment. Yet all this is a generality rather too wide for our purpose, and like other generalities requiring much qualification. Science has flourished alongside of art in the great periods, and to say that the two cannot flourish together is to show a want of faith in the essential unity of all intellectual development. The phenomenon which we are considering requires some more specific explanation. We may doubt, in fact, if we look a little further, that other causes would have to be assigned.

How does the change in criticism manifest itself in other departments of literature? Can we speak of a decay of criticism without reflecting that there is a much wider decay—a decay of literature itself? It is a delicate matter to handle; for we would not shock living sensibilities by quoting them as examples of obvious degeneracy. There is no want of men of talent, though there may be a dearth of genius, and it would be ungrateful to reproach a genuine poet because he is not one of the great lights of all time. Half the argument must therefore be left to be filled up by readers. Yet it would be affectation to doubt of certain general results. Would any one maintain, for example, that we are in a great poetical epoch—an epoch such as that of the early years of this or the seventeenth or perhaps even the eighteenth century; that any one will care a century hence to study our poets, as we study Shakespeare, and Spenser, and Milton, and Byron, and Shelley, and Wordsworth, and Keats, and Scott? We have, of course, two great poets still amongst us, and still writing; but, alas! we cannot mention the names of Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Browning without remembering that they belong more to the outgoing than to the existing generation. There are certainly two or three other younger poets whose genius is equally beyond dispute to men of taste; yet it is some time since even the youngest revealed his powers to the world; and he would be a bold man who would say that he could see elsewhere indications of a ripening intellectual harvest likely to be

as rich as the old. Again, let those of us who are old enough go back some thirty years in imagination and compare the prophets of that day with the prophets of this. Let them try to make all possible allowance for the natural illusion which casts a halo round the teachers of our youth. Can they, after making the comparison, say fairly that we could match man for man? In the first period most young men of any intellectual activity followed one of these remarkable teachers. Cardinal Newman is still with us, but has already become classical. Is there any modern theologian who, regarded merely from the literary point of view, is master of so admirable a style, who can display such admirable dialectical skill, such subtlety of thought, such delicacy of sentiment, such a blending of strength with grace, as used to charm the enthusiasts of the movement in which he was the chief leader? Another set of zealots followed the teaching of Carlyle. Carlyle's style will, of course, be condemned by literary purists; and those who object to a free use of the grotesque or the overstrained may show abundant reasons for not accepting him as a model. But it is not from that point of view that he can be adequately judged. And one may safely say that there is no living writer whose influence over congenial minds is comparable to Carlyle's as an intellectual stimulus. You might return from the strange glooms and splendors of the "French Revolution" or "Sartor Resartus" revolted or fascinated; but to read them with appreciation was to go through an intellectual crisis, and to enter into their spirit was to experience something like a religious conversion. You were not the same man afterwards. No one ever exercised a more potent sway over the inmost being of his disciple. The many whose temperament put them outside the charmed circles of Newman and Carlyle found a more temperate and prosaic leader in J. S. Mill. Even the disciples of Mill's school have shown a tendency of late to modify, if not radically to alter, the old tradition. Yet no one has arisen amongst them who can be compared in a literary sense with Mill. There may be more accurate, minute, and comprehensive thinkers of his school. They have produced no books at all comparable in point of style, or as models of literary composition, with those in which Mill showed his masculine vigor as a thinker, his extraordinary fulness of mind, and his fascinating power of importing at least appar-

ent lucidity into the darkest and most perplexed subjects. That thought has advanced in all the directions indicated by these names may be fully admitted; we can in a sense judge them from a superior standpoint and mark their limitations. But have we — the products of the later generation — produced any leaders so capable of erecting permanent literary landmarks?

Make a sharp transition. In those days, about thirty years ago, there were novelists of the first rank; writers such that the announcement of a new publication by them sent a thrill through every corner not inaccessible to circulating libraries. In the period from twenty to forty years removed from us, we had been startled by the new power revealed, though not for the first time, in "Vanity Fair;" and had eagerly accepted "Pendennis" and "The Newcomes" and "Esmond." A foolish controversy, still sometimes continued, was raging as to the rival merits of their author and the contemporary author of "Pickwick" and "David Copperfield." Wiser persons enjoyed both, and there were few months in which one did not greet with delight the appearance of a number of one serial in the familiar yellow, and another in the equally familiar green. Then the whole literary world had just been thrown into an excitement, never since paralleled, by the sudden apparition of "Jane Eyre." A greater writer was making a more gradual approach to fame by the publication of the "Scenes of Clerical Life." And besides Thackeray, Dickens, Miss Brontë, and George Eliot, a number of writers, some happily still living, provided agreeable entertainment in the intervals, and might be regarded as at least worthy subordinates. Lord Lytton — to mention only the dead — was publishing "My Novel" and "The Caxtons," which are at least excellent specimens of good literary craftsmanship; Mrs. Gaskell produced "Ruth" and "Mary Barton;" and Kingsley wrote "Alton Locke" and "Hypatia" and "Westward Ho!" books which, if they will not bear the closest inspection in all respects, show at least a vigor and originality for which it would be hard to produce a later parallel. It is rather dangerous, perhaps, to ask whether we have such novelists now. But, allowing every reader to select his favorite or pair of favorites to be worthy champions of the moderns, he will find it hard to fill up a list capable of doing battle against their predecessors. Have

we any counterbalancing considerations to suggest? Is there any department of literature in which we can claim a preponderance as distinct as our predecessors in this direction? In poetry, philosophy, fiction, we seem to have the worst of it. There is yet one direction in which we might make a stand. History should be a strong point, for in history we are approaching the scientific field; and in history nobody can doubt that we have made in some respects enormous advances. The Anglo-Saxon and Charlemagne have been nearly abolished; and that is understood to mean that we have made a great advance in accuracy of research. But, from the literary point of view, it may be doubted whether we could meet without misgiving such a champion as Macaulay. The difference is significant. It is easy to point out Macaulay's glaring defects; the limitation of his political views; the offensive glitter of his style; and, in that respect, at least one living historian seems to be justly his superior. Yet when we read the "Essays" and the first part of the "History" we are less confident. The extraordinary fulness of knowledge, the command of materials, the power of grouping events and forming them into a clear and flowing narrative, are so undeniable that we are inclined to admit, in spite of all his faults, that he is unapproached by his successors in the power which goes to a monumental work. Modern writers seem to be sometimes the victims of an indigestion caught at the State Paper Office; sometimes they are tempted to tack together a series of brilliant pamphlets, and trust to fortune to make it a history. At present they seem scarcely capable of turning out work so massive, so finely executed, and marked by such unity of design as their forefathers. And yet we may admit that, in history at least, we have the advantage of a serious and energetic body of students really achieving good work, and at least accumulating the materials of literary triumphs. Casting a rapid glance over these facts, the conclusion seems to be inevitable. The literary, like the natural, harvest has been of late blighted and scanty. We have passed from a land flowing with milk and honey into a comparative desert. As Johnson said when he went from England to Scotland, we see the flower dying away to the stalk. In a utilitarian and scientific sense we may be making progress; in the regions of imagination and artistic achievement — so far at least as literature is concerned — we have been progressing

backwards. Great names are scarce; there is hardly a leader left who can stir the enthusiasm of the young and make us feel that the torch of intellectual light is being delivered into worthy hands. If we would not flatter the time, must we not confess that we are at least crossing a barren zone; and at present without any distinct glimpse of a fertile region beyond?

Admitting the fact, we can of course be in no want of explanations. Any popular preacher — in or out of the pulpit — will supply us with as many as we please. It is all the fault of democracy, says one self-appointed prophet. How should culture, refinement, polish, be appreciated in art when they fail to govern society? They are the fruits of a settled order, of a select circle trained in accepted traditions of refinement, able to perceive and appreciate delicate shades of manner and meaning, and revolted instinctively by the coarse and glaring. How can such plants thrive in the social hubbub and anarchy of to-day? As well expect the candidate in a popular constituency to attract voters by the graces of a courtier under the old *régime* as expect a modern writer to emulate the polish of his forefathers. The loud-voiced, noisy spouter, the man who does not stick at trifles or bother himself about logical consistency, who can give his hearers good potent stimulants instead of delicate flavors, is the man for a mob; and he will hustle the more thin-skinned orator, with his fine perceptions and wire-drawn scruples, out of the arena. What encouragement is there for doing delicate work when you work for the million who prefer noise to harmony, and cannot be bothered to draw distinctions between a Tennyson and a Tupper? Why put the labor of years on producing that exquisite polish which makes all the difference between the finest and the coarsest work, but which is utterly overlooked by the vulgar? The finest work, like the coarsest, will at best gain five minutes' attention between the leading article and the sensation novel. What chance that it will be appreciated? You have to learn before all things the art of advertising; for you are one of a mob of writers all struggling for attention, and to advertise is essentially to attract buyers of your goods by inducements independent of their intrinsic merits. And if your aspirations are of the highest, how are you to maintain the necessary quietness of soul in the bustle and confusion of modern life? Make the least error, and the whole band of admirers and puffers and genial critics makes a dead set at

you, crying out "More of that!" and inciting you to be faithless to yourself, and stimulate your little vein of spontaneous originality into feverish and morbid activity.

Such declamation may be continued indefinitely. When we ask calmly what it means, we may see reasons for doubt. Let us "clear our minds of cant," and above all of the cant of the pessimists. Is it not the plain truth that every social order has its characteristic dangers? The danger in ages of calm and refinement is the danger of sterility. The artist becomes finicking and over-critical. He is such a delicate plant that he ceases to bear fruit. He becomes, like Gray, so sensitive that it takes him two years to write a score of delicate stanzas. For the true critic we have the exquisite connoisseur, who cannot bear the crumpled rose-leaf, and values mere technical quality at the expense of power and abundance. If we are in a period when the opposite faults are more common, we must not overlook our advantages. The greatest writers, said Scott somewhere — and he had no doubt personal reasons for the remark — have been the most voluminous. They have, in other words, been men so full of superabundant energy that they dashed out their work at white heat, now making a blunder and now achieving a masterpiece. Not only Scott himself, but Shakespeare, may be quoted in illustration. Such men and many others wrote impetuously, and the best of them wrote at periods when the world was throbbing with passionate excitement, and the old school of refined critics was for the time being thrust to the wall. Revolutions in the world of thought, as in the political world, bring great men to the front by sheer force of contagious enthusiasm. Now is it true that we may regret the lines which Shakespeare neglected to blot, and the slovenly style of too many of Scott's productions? Perhaps, if you are a delicate connoisseur, you would rather be a Landor than a Scott, and dine with a select party a century after you are dead instead of feasting in a crowded hall of the living. We need not dispute the point; though probably the ultimate judgment of the world will be that the men who thrilled and moved their contemporaries should really have the preference to the manufacturers of exquisite jewellery for the select few. But, in any case, the difficulty for our present purpose remains. We are as wanting in Scotts and Byrons at least as much as in Lan-

dors or Keatses. Indeed, it might be plausibly maintained that we are more wanting. Mr. Tennyson, whatever else he may be, is amongst the most exquisite artists who ever wrote in English; and it would be easy to quote other instances. Indeed, the prevailing fault of our most popular school at the moment is the tendency to an excessive appreciation of the more delicate and effeminate forms of art. Why have we not a Scott pouring forth three Waverley novels in a year, or a Byron writing "Glaours" and "Childe Harolds" and "Don Juans" at the full speed of his pen? The adulation which surrounds a popular author to-day is scarcely more exciting or unsettling than that which led Scott and Byron to over-hasty production. If the excitements of the present time, the vast changes of thought and society, which in the dawn of the revolutionary movement brought out such a host of vigorous writers, do not produce the same effect, it is certainly not because the questions at issue are less momentous, or men less profoundly interested. Nor, again, can it be that the intellect of to-day has become frivolous and superficial. Whatever our dearth of great names, there was never a time in which more severe and strenuous intellectual labor was bestowed upon extending and modifying our thoughts upon all topics in which thought can be exercised. Never were there more competent and thoroughgoing students of philosophy and history and science. Where there was one serious laborer in any such field half a century ago, there are now twenty. Many of them at least have withstood the temptation to be superficial and merely popular. Why do they produce no such leaders as of old?

An answer is often given by saying that the social is but the counterpart of a spiritual class; that men's minds are unsettled upon all topics; that every opinion is disputed and discussed; and that even men of settled convictions are chilled and paralyzed by the absence of general sympathy. The text upon which Carlyle and Mr. Ruskin have preached so eloquently and forcibly might of course be expanded indefinitely. We might add in particular that it is as applicable to artistic as to philosophical movements. The queer phenomenon called æstheticism is an indication of its importance. Your true æsthetic is a cultivated person who has reached a kind of artistic indifferentism. He has learnt to sympathize with so many forms of art that he really sympathizes

with none. As knowledge has extended, we have become familiar with all forms of the beautiful; we have played like children with "revivals" of all kinds; we have been by turns classical and romantic; we have aped the mediæval and the Renaissance, and even the "Queen Anne" period, with earnestness enough for masqueraders; and the æsthete, bewildered and jaded, has come to the conclusion that, on the whole, there is no principle at all; that every artistic creed has pleased in its turn; that none can be said to be right or wrong; that whatever pleases is therefore right; and consequently that the only principle is to have as many and as keen tastes as possible. The misfortune is that in this hopeless chaos of tastes and fashions we lose sight of the one important thing, ourselves; that all our tastes have become affectations, and that we have lost precisely that spontaneity which is the universal condition of excellence in any form of art whatever. We change restlessly and hopelessly; we have a taste for everything and a genuine enthusiasm for nothing; all our work is more or less of a sham; and our poets, who can turn out a very pretty ballad or mediæval romance, or Elizabethan drama or classical idyl, somehow find one thing impossible—namely, to give full utterance to the hopes and fears and aspirations of living men.

Granting all that may be said upon this score, there yet remains a difficulty. Why should this be so? Why, if the old ideals have become hollow and we have not framed ideals of our own, should we not take refuge in a downright realism? Life, surely, is as interesting as ever; the impulses which move men's hearts and convulse the whole social order manifest themselves at least as clearly to every reflective mind. If we cannot take much interest in classical mythology, and the old gods and goddesses appear to us as bloodless phantoms, surely a downright portraiture of the men and women of to-day, of the joys and sorrows felt by the millions of our struggling cities, should excite more interest than ever in the thoughtful, who are daily forced to consider the practical problems involved. If we are tired of knights in buff jerkins, we have by no means heard the last of "Alton Locke," and the yeast of which Kingsley spoke is working and fermenting with unprecedented vehemence. Some writers seem to accept this principle; though unluckily, in certain of its manifestations, realism and naturalism seem

to mean a steady contemplation of the nasty. But in England at least realism does not appear to thrive. If poetry shrinks from such work, it should surely be suitable to novelists. Thackeray painted the upper classes of his day, and Dickens caricatured their inferiors, and each, after his kind, showed astonishing penetration. But they seem to have left no successors. We have some most graceful and delicate portrait-painters, and many who can give us pleasant domestic interiors, and others who can interest grown-up children with extravagant "sensation" stories. What we do not see is the power possessed, for example, by Fielding in an eminent degree, of laying bare the real working forces of society, and making us know better the actual men and women of our own day. We do not want tracts or blue-books in the shape of fiction; but we do want to get a downright masculine insight into living realities, and it can hardly be said that we are often so lucky as to get it. Carlyle accused Scott of writing merely for the purpose of "harmlessly amusing indolent, languid men." It was the kind of judgment which your true Puritan forms upon all forms of story-telling; and it is far from being just to Scott's noblest work. But in our own day it would seem that not only is any high aim become inconceivable, but that there is an express aversion to anything which implies thought in the writer and requires it from the reader. Novelists who make any demands upon our attention must generally be content to go unread.

If, then, we might argue from the absence of great names, of reputations due to lofty purpose and strenuous endeavor, we might come to the conclusion that frivolity and littleness is the mark of our time. Some people accept that conclusion, as, indeed, there never was an age which was not pronounced by contemporary moralists to be unprecedentedly deficient in virtue and high purpose. To ask whether such a melancholy conclusion would be justifiable just now upon other grounds would be to affect an impossible omniscience. To draw such an inference, however, from the grounds here considered would be rash, or rather plainly erroneous. It is so far from being true that the absence of great elevations implies a decline of the general standard that the reverse is in many cases demonstrable. If we have not great teachers, it is not because inquiry is less eagerly pushed, whatever else may be the cause.

It is just the coincidence between the marked increase of intellectual activity and appreciation of beauty in some directions, and the absence of great artists and great leaders of thought, which makes the problem really curious and interesting. But if it be asked, what then is the explanation? there are only two answers to be suggested — namely, that we do not know, and that it does not greatly matter. We do not know, probably we shall never know, what are the causes and the indications of the great intellectual harvests. Who can tell why at one moment there arises a group of eminent men, producing masterpieces for all future time, and why the group dies out and leaves no successors? Who can say why Shakespeare flourished in one generation, and no Englishmen have ever since been able to write more than second-rate dramas? Why the last half of the eighteenth century was barren even in the kind of poetry in which its early years were so prolific? Why, again, the group of great writers in the first years of this century have left so few worthy successors? After the event we can of course suggest some kind of explanation, especially that kind of explanation which consists in stating the facts over again in different language. We can point to some crisis in thought or in social development which must have stimulated men's minds to unusual activity, inasmuch as we know that, as a matter of fact, it did so. But those who have read philosophical speculations upon such topics most attentively will be the first to admit how unsatisfactory and superficial are the explanations which they offer. We can only say in the vaguest way that in the mental as in the physical world there are periods of sudden blossoming, when the vital forces of nature are manifested in the production of exquisite flowers, and after which it again passes into a latent stage. But so long as there is no reason to assume any diminution of vitality, there is no reason for inferring that a temporary obscurity will not be followed by new flashes of light. Perhaps the Shakespeare of the twentieth century is already learning the rudiments of infantile speech, and some of us may live to greet his appearance, and probably — for we shall then be twenty years older — to lament the inferiority of the generation which accepts him. Who, again, can tell? And what, let us add, does it matter? Can we not rub along pretty well without contemporaries of the highest excellence?

Thought is moving somehow, and mankind is trying to assimilate the new ideas which have been slowly drilled into its thick heads. And what is the real value to mankind of even the highest literary excellence? Is it not after all a luxury — an amusement — a feather in the cap of a nation, but something which has but a very small relation to its true interests? How far does its influence penetrate below that cultivated stratum which naturally takes itself to be the one stratum worth considering, but is, in reality, no such matter? How many people were there even during the period of the greatest men who really studied or in the least degree understood their works, or even knew of their existence? When we say that a great man influences thought, is it not much nearer the truth to say that he expresses rather more exquisitely conclusions which would have been rendered in a more clumsy fashion without him? Is he not rather an effect than a cause, and an effect of no very great importance to the bulk of mankind? Walk through the streets of London for a day and ask how many men you meet who have really the slightest appreciation of, say, Mr. Darwin, or anything more than a vague impression that he somehow considered men to be a kind of monkey? And, whatever the importance of his theories, is it not notorious, and, indeed, the very secret of their importance, that he was but just ahead of numerous competitors aiming at the same goal? What can be said of mere literary reputations: of your Shakespeares and Dantes and Homers? Putting aside the great mass to whom they are mere names, or at the most represent a kind of superstitious tradition, what are they even to the few who study them? Analyze the life of your æsthetic critic who lavishes his adulation upon their shrines, and find out, if you can, how much of his real life, of the interests which occupy his mind and determine his conduct, are really due to the poems which he professes to idolize. Have their writings been polestars, or mere playthings to amuse leisure hours in the interval of more serious interests? We can do very well, for a time, without new stars of the first magnitude, and content ourselves with those of past ages, believing contentedly, if we please, that so long as the energy of the race continues unabated, it will from time to time, though at what time we cannot say, throw out again, as of old, a group of dazzling luminaries.

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BACK FROM THE ROAD.

It is only just back from the road, that, ankle-deep in mud in winter and in dust in summer, creeps down a hill away to a little town, crowned by an old, old church, and washed by the broad blue sea. But it might be miles from anywhere, so dense is the gloom, so great is the quiet that surrounds the place, and appears like an intangible wall keeping off evil intruders. Another wall exists, crowned in summer by many-colored snapdragons, that grow all along the top, and with every niche full of moss, and here and there a hart's-tongue fern or the tiny spleenwort, and when we push open the faded green door, and come out into the square before the house, we are insensibly reminded of sixty years ago, and tread softly lest we should arouse sleepers, and awake them rudely to the fact that time has gone on, although they have remained stationary. The place is beautifully kept: there is not a weed on the gravel-path or in the flower-beds, quaintly bordered as they are by a notched bone edging, made from the bones of cows' ankle-joints in a way that is never seen now, and where columbines and Canterbury bells are nodding to each other in the soft wind; while beyond the deep green lawn a tiny fountain rises and falls monotonously and musically under the shadow of a dark, broad-branched cypress, that is as the very embodiment of resignation and prayer, and seems the guardian spirit of the place. The lawn slopes quite down to the river, that appears to run slower here, before dashing over the weir away out to the sea, beyond the sand-banks that glitter and gleam like silver in the bright sunshine; and on one side of the lawn is a paddock separated from the garden by a wire-fence, on which an old pony rests his head and watches us, sure that we shall remember him and rub his ears in the way he particularly affects, and that reminds him of early days and the dear young master he loved; but he too has learned to wait, and only turns his eyes as we walk up and down, and evinces no impatience, sure that what to-day lacks will be supplied by to-morrow, and if not then, at latest the day after. Indeed, the whole place suggests waiting, as if life existent here, in bee, or bird, or flower, paused for a while, expectant that, some day or other, ripple of laughter or chime of voices would ring out, and fill the silence with human life again. There is no hint or touch of death: even in au-

LIVING AGE. VOL. XL. 2068

turn, when the road outside is strewn with dead leaves and twigs and beech-mast, inside the wall are no signs of coming winter, for the shrubs are evergreen, and the cypress and ilexes change their raiment unnoticed, save by the gardener, who might be a brownie, so unperceived is he, and so fond of working at early dawn, when the windows of the house have their blinds drawn, and no one can look at him as he sweeps, and weeds, and brushes. The house itself is square and commonplace, with thin, white pillars supporting a somewhat crooked porch, at which you, perchance, might even smile; but to us, who know all the secrets, it represents the united efforts of the young pair who designed it, and saw it carried out proudly beneath their own eyes, as a shelter below which they could sit hand in hand, and watch the baby-boy play and laugh on the lawn, underneath their seat, secure that in so watching him he would not stray down to the river, or wander away to stroke his pony in the paddock: outside the porch is a silent, wide, dark hall, cool in summer, by reason of its marble pavement and shaded, open windows, and hung on each side with soft-toned copies of well-known Italian pictures, done years ago by the bride and bridegroom on their lengthened honeymoon, and brought home with infinite peril — so she says, smiling, even now — across land and sea, to deck their home, now building for them in this quiet, beautiful corner of England. It is curious to note how insensibly, but surely, houses become exactly like their owners: naturally the mere furnishing of them gives them a stamp of individuality, but time does more than this; for as months and years go by, the walls seem to inhale some of the vitality of their inhabitants, and become warmed and almost living as the same people year after year pass their days and nights between them. Or else, how account for the blank, expressionless look of an ordinary hotel, passed through by different folks, not dwelt in, or cared for, but simply used as a shelter? or for the warm, crowsy, genial face of another one, lived in by generations of the same family, and each corner of which has its own story and its own associations? or yet, again, for the aspect of this same house, should it change hands — ay, even keeping the same furniture? for then does it not seem cold and resentful, as it puts on a very different aspect to greet those to whom 'tis only a house, and not, as it was erstwhile, a storeplace of memories, nay,

even a temple sacred to the holiest of holies — a happy, honored home? Dreaming here on the threshold of the one place we would bring before you, there is no limit to this fancy; for the house, built as it was in love and smiles, and consecrated by loss and sorrow in the lapse of years, bears out entirely our theory: not even the veriest iconoclast of these days of ours could help realizing it, and pausing, bare-headed, on the doorstep, ere rushing in to see if he could secure something high-art or Queen Anne with which to mock at — though he knows it not — his own well-loved shams and Tottenham Court imitations, that yet lead his soul from entire revelment in crude blues and reds, to better, because quieter things. For not even he could help feeling the repose and resignation that could ever be found here, and although he may turn away disgusted when he sees the faded, gaudy Brussels carpets of sixty years ago, and feel conscious that there is nothing here that will harmonize with his surroundings, he will allow there is something felt, but not expressible, that causes him not to sneer at the poor, ugly, old things, and that somewhat curiously makes him think of his mother, and the days when money did not represent the be-all and end-all of life, and when hurry, that kill-joy of the present, was not for him, and he had leisure to enjoy the sense of life, and the thousand sounds and scents that make up one's very early recollections. But although we may enter the house, and reverently commune with the past among its shadows, he cannot come in yet, for only yesterday did the mistress leave her quiet, well-loved home for a quieter and better-affectioned one in the beautiful little churchyard, where the snowdrops grow wild all spring, and make it look as if angels' wings enfolded it, and so her presence still seems to linger here; yet when to-morrow comes all the world will rush, nor realize that the auctioneer's Lot I. and Lot II., that means to them but a sordid bargain, represent the different notes in her song of life, as surely as the dots and lines of a sheet of music paper can mean an epithalamium, or a funeral march, or even a march to victory. For she was fifteen years old when the battle of Waterloo was fought, and remembered hearing the news the very day she began a wondrous work of art, that is now framed and hanging over the bookshelves in the drawing-room, as an evidence of what she did before she took to painting in the delicate, subdued

style that characterized her later days. It is indeed a curious device, and on a black cloth ground represents a cornucopia full of flowers manufactured from small atoms and in successive layers or petals of cloth — in some cases true to nature, while in others truth is sacrificed to sentiment, for a blue passion-flower is made from tiny morsels of a fine, pale material of which the gown was composed which she wore the first time she met her future husband, and the white silk honey-suckle, perfect in form if not in hue, is made from the soft shawl that enfolded her one baby the day he opened his eyes on this calm corner of a noisy world. It took her years to complete, for many events passed by, and she forgot from time to time her handiwork; but as life gradually schooled the somewhat impulsive maiden, forming her into the calm matron, well balanced in mind and manner, she deemed it wrong to have aught incomplete that she had once commenced, and so finished it, and hung it up above the bookcase, proud, though she confessed it not, that she, who was thought unfeminine, because she could do most things best, as companion to the man she loved, had thus vindicated her character, and had given proof that she could do frivolous and womanly sewing should it be necessary for her so to do, as well as, if not better than, the most blushing, retiring wife or maiden in her neighborhood.

The screen in front of the just extinguished fire has no such happy memories as these, for it was begun and ended in feverish anxiety to find, in constant employment that had no dual associations about it, some other object for contemplation than the dead faces of the husband and child, who perished together in the river below the garden, and who were brought home and laid in the chamber above this one just five-and-fifty long, weary years ago; for how could she paint, when beside her easel stood his; or ride, when his horse was neighing impatiently for him in the stable; or think of reading the book when his paper-knife was still where he had put it, and from whence it was never removed for many years, and then only by accident, of which she seemed to take no notice, though we who loved her, knew well what the heedless action of a young child had done? Nay, rather, she seemed to take to the child; and after time went by, and she had been thirty years a widow, he used to be here always as a grown man of five-and-thirty, and his boy rode the old pony who to-morrow will

be shot kindly, for there is none to love or tend him, now his friends are dead. But the screen represented to her a passage from passionate despair to calm hope and prayerful waiting, and to her every stitch represented its own place in the progress — here false stitches displayed backsliding, and there a well-formed, fully-shaded rosebud spoke hopefully of religion conquering natural agony, and hope shining where human eyes saw nothing save blackness and despair. To-morrow the screen will doubtless be sold as rubbish, and may be bought for the glass and frame, and hold some crewel-work of today, wrought by machinery, or in hurried single-stitch, without scarce a thought to last a little time; and the work she did may be burned as useless, and we wonder if, when we despise old handiworks and do away with them, we unwittingly pain some tender shade, who may yet linger a while or at times amongst us, and almost believe that we do, so tender do we feel towards all the things she made. We feel a pang while we gaze around us, and know that soon all will be dismantled and despised; for none is old enough to be in the fashion, while all is too old to be so useful that it must be kept. In the folds of the long chintz curtains in the drawing-room her child may have played hide-and-seek; his little face, that, painted by Leslie, hangs over his mother's chair, and that can never cease to be the face of a child, may have peeped out roguishly from the faded lilies of the valley among their pale green leaves, and smiled to him even while she chid him laughing; for she must have cared for them, for she always placed the folds herself and saw that they were carefully sent to be "calendered" every successive spring. The lilies are repeated on the carpet, with the addition of scarlet and blue and yellow roses; but all their hues are toned with time, and the sixty years have done nought to it save what is kindly, and, while unmarrying the texture, have only softened down its asperities in a way that time alone has, and that he often employs beneficially to us, too impatient, too irritable mortals. The furniture is solid and heavy, from the great sideboard with the cellaret beneath — so like a tomb that we distinctly remember feeling ourselves impelled irresistibly to bury our dolls therein — to the great four-post mahogany bedstead in which she slept night after night, all her long, quiet lifetime; and we cannot bear to think of the lodging-house parlors and chambers in which it must end its days.

But although we cannot save it all, some one, we know, will buy the contents of that little inner room, that seems the heart of the house, broken, maybe, but still beating where she always said her many prayers, and where her son slept and played those five short years of his life. Here is his rosewood crib, with fluted pillars, loose in places, and easily turned in their sockets, that speak of his restless little fingers, with one side that lets down with a sound that had its own meaning to her ears, and that, caused once by a new housemaid, who knew no traditions, brought to her eyes torrents of tears, though forty years had gone by since the child died; and here, in a shelf over the fireplace, is a row of small, worn books that, bought for him, have been read by all the child-visitors she so dearly loved, and that represented to her her own boy. Any child now happy in the thousand and one lovely and artistic picture-books that crowd our nurseries, would disdainfully turn away from these poor, faded little volumes: their "Beauty and the Beast" has pages a foot wide, and designs that we long to see reproduced in our dress and houses, while this one has thin, brown paper, and rough woodcuts representing Beauty in the dress of the Empire, with a long scarf round her shoulders, and gloves ample in length for a modern beauty's requirements; while the Beast is like nothing so much as a great Newfoundland dog. This stands by the little collection of anecdotes of Miss Lydia Lively, which is published in 1802 by Darton, Harvey, and Darton, and bears on its pages evidences of profound study, inasmuch as little pencil x's show exactly how much of these anecdotal pages constituted a lesson; and bleared round patches on the thin paper disclose further that the readings were not always without tears; while rhymes for the nursery, an epitome of Scripture history, the "Stranger's Offering," and the "Parents and Teachers' Catechism," of dates ranging from 1802 to about 1810, tell that they belonged to her own childhood; and so keep distinct memories from the universal Primer, and original poems, the date of which is 1826. Another little book, bound in rough red binding, with a wavy line across it, has lost its title-page, but is inscribed in her tremulous, fine Italian hand, "The Child's Book," and contains poems and pictures of the simplest and crudest, if the most moral designs. We may save the contents of this little room from the auctioneer's hammer possibly,

but as we look round we wonder if, when we are gone too, and our belongings in their turn are scattered, there will be any of the aroma of the past left among them. This whole place appears to us full of the most delicate fragrance, full of hope or love, or pain or fear; and is like some rare perfume enclosed safely in a crystal flask, that must be shattered to-morrow when the world comes in to buy and sell. We may catch a few drops as the bottle breaks, but it cannot last; once it is dispelled, all must vanish like a dream, or like the life that was lived in all its various phases within these walls. And so from this we come to wonder why we should ever be vexed, or worn, or suffer, when 'tis all for such a little space; and when life has to be let to run its course, however much we try to stem the stream, and call out against the inevitable. The river runs, and best are those who go on their way with it quietly—not rushing, neither expecting too much, and rather resting, as a caged bird does, once the first vain struggles are over, quiet, yet watchful for escape, which oft comes not until death opens our prison door. Thinking like this, we cannot envy the dwellers in great cities, who may not stay a while without seeming to throw out of gear all that complex machinery they call society; even while we regret more sadly than ever all we shall lose when we can no longer find a resting-place, back from the road.

J. E. PANTON.

From The Cornhill Magazine.
NO NEW THING.

CHAPTER XVI.

MATERNAL INFLUENCE.

WHEN Mr. Brune escaped from the presence of the justly incensed Mrs. Winnington, he shaped his course for home without further delay. Under the circumstances, he no longer cared to search the house for his son, being in some fear of drifting into an embarrassing situation, and thinking, too, that it would be best to let the young fellow choose his own time for making any revelations that might have to be made.

He had not, however, proceeded very far on his way through the gathering gloom when he was arrested by a shrill whistle; immediately after which some one crossed the adjacent meadow at a slinging trot, and, taking the hedgerow

in his stride, landed neatly in the muddy lane.

"Oh, there you are!" said Mr. Brune. "They told me you were up at the house, but I couldn't find you anywhere about."

"I saw you starting; so I thought I might as well catch you up," answered Walter, passing his arm through his father's; and so they walked on for a couple of hundred yards or so in silence.

"I say"—began Walter at length.

"Well; what do you say?"

Facility of expression had never been among Walter's gifts. He thought for a little longer, and then made a fresh start with,—

"I—er—I've got a sort of a secret to tell you."

"Ah!" remarked Mr. Brune, "you may well say a sort of a secret. A secret, I take it, is a matter known, at the most, to two persons; when a third is let in it becomes, as you say, a sort of a secret; but when an interested party happens to have overheard the whole business from beginning to end, it is no longer any sort of a secret at all."

"Eh?"

"You need not give yourself the agony of searching for appropriate words in which to tell your tale. I have heard it already—and several details which I fancy you would not have thought it necessary to communicate to me into the bargain. What possessed you to choose that room of all others in the house to make a declaration in? I remember that, when I was a boy, I used often to creep to the end of the corridor in hopes of seeing some exciting episode take place beneath me; but nothing ever came of it. Mrs. Winnington has had better luck."

"Mrs. Winnington? Good Lord! She wasn't there when—when——"

"She was, though—didn't miss a word of it. And now that I begin to realize what the scene must have been, I can't help wishing that I too could have been concealed somewhere and watched her face," said Mr. Brune, bursting into a hearty laugh.

"Oh, it's all very well to laugh," remonstrated Walter; "but this is serious."

"The whole thing is undoubtedly serious," answered Mr. Brune, recovering his gravity. "At the same time, I don't know that the way in which Mrs. Winnington and I have come to a knowledge of it is not as good a one as another. It has saved a world of gradual explanations."

"Is she awfully angry?"

"Well, yes; she is rather angry, I believe; but that should hardly surprise you."

"Poor Edith!" muttered Walter; "how she will catch it! I have a sort of feeling that I ought to go back to the house at once."

"I have a sort of feeling that you will do no such thing, so long as I can hold you," returned Mr. Brune, keeping a firm grip of his son's arm. "My dear boy, you must allow parents and children to settle their differences between themselves. And, talking of that, doesn't it strike you that I may have a word or two to say to your marriage—or rather engagement?"

"Oh, of course. In fact, I was just going to tell you all about it. I know," continued Walter penitently, "that I have no business to think about marrying at all; but—but, in short, I couldn't help it."

"You have done what can't be helped now, at all events," observed Mr. Brune. "I don't blame you," he resumed, after a pause. "A son who has never troubled his father in any worse way than by falling in love with a girl who hasn't a sixpence, and who has an outrageous old mother, must be allowed to be a success, as sons go, and can fairly claim some indulgence. But, setting that consideration aside, it is a very open question whether I have any right at all to interfere with your plans, except as a friendly adviser. When you were a boy, you know, I used to make you obey me, and never allowed you to ask questions or begin your sentences with a but."

Walter nodded. "It's the only way," he said.

"It is gratifying to me to have your approval," said Mr. Brune gravely. "Well, so long as it was necessary that I should be master, I believe I was a tolerably strict one; but a time always arrives when the old bird's functions come to an end, and the young ones must fly for themselves and shift for themselves. There isn't room for you in the old nest, and you must feather a new one as best you can. Or again, if you prefer a nest without feathers, what can I say? I can give you the benefit of my experience as to the comfort of nests of that description; but it isn't much use for me to scold."

"Bless you! you couldn't scold if you were to try for a twelvemonth," said Walter, giving his father's arm a squeeze; "you don't know the way."

"Anyhow, I am not going to scold."

Nor am I going to remonstrate. Indeed, if there came to be a question of remonstrances between us, I am half afraid that it would be for me to receive, not to utter, them. I have not done my duty by you, Walter; though I believe I may say that I have intended to do it—if that is any excuse."

"My dear old man, what are you talking about? You have been the kindest father and the best friend any fellow could wish for," cried Walter warmly.

"Ah, well! You have a case against me, all the same. Things have not fallen out quite as they seemed likely to do when your mother and I agreed that you were to succeed me at the farm, instead of entering a profession like your brothers. To a certain extent I have been unfortunate; that is to say that I have neither made nor inherited what I expected to do; but, on the other hand, I have muddled away a lot of money. The upshot of it all is that, instead of being very comfortably off, I am a poor man and shall never be anything else. I hear people talk of making farming pay; but I can't say I have ever yet met a man who has accomplished the feat."

"I defy any man to make farming pay in these days," said Walter confidently.

"Well; but don't you see what this brings us to? The only thing that could enable you to support a wife and family would be my death; and goodness only knows how long I may not live. I am as strong as a horse and barely past the half-century."

"I only wish you may live another fifty years."

"Thank you very much; but fifty years is rather a long period to propose to a young lady for an engagement. How are you going to get out of that difficulty?"

Walter scratched his head, and answered with much candor that he was hanged if he knew.

Then Mr. Brune pulled a letter out of his pocket. "The afternoon post brought me this," he said, "and I was going to show it to you before I heard anything about your love affairs. It is from William Boulger—your uncle William, whom you have heard of, but never seen, and who is now senior partner in the firm of Boulger & Co.—and he writes to offer an opening in the bank to one of my sons. He means one of the younger ones, no doubt, and I suppose the fact of the matter is that he has been quarrelling with his own people. A few years ago I should have said 'No, thank you;' but now

things look so bad that I thought I ought at least to let you hear of the proposal before declining it. As far as I understand him, it is only a clerkship that he offers; but he alludes to 'probable advancement in life,' which, I conclude, means eventual partnership. Now William Boulger is, or used to be, an infernally disagreeable fellow; but he is a man of business and a man of his word, and the chances are that, if anything, he means more than he says, rather than less. I think the matter might be worth your considering."

"My dear father," exclaimed Walter, "it is the very thing. What a stroke of luck! Write off to the old boy, and tell him I'm his man. I don't mind confessing to you now that I *was* a little bit down about my prospects; but this will put everything right, depend upon it."

Even in that uncertain light Walter could see that his father was looking at him in an odd, wistful way.

"What is it?" he asked. "You think I shan't like the sort of work, eh?"

"My poor fellow, I don't think about it; I know you will utterly hate and abhor it. You, who love the open air and the smell of the fields almost as much as I do, and outdoor sports a great deal more than I ever did — you to sit upon a high stool in the city, totting up figures from morning to night! Even the prospect of your dying a rich man could never reconcile me to such a notion."

"I should be doing it with an object," said Walter quickly.

"Well, yes; there's that. And you can always throw it up, and return to your crust of bread and liberty. I want you to promise me, my boy, that you will do that, if you find the life intolerable. But I think, upon the whole, you would do wisely to accept the offer. You would be none the worse off for having given the thing a trial, and living in London will give you an insight into the ways of the world which you could never have acquired if you had vegetated down at Broom Leas all the days of your life. Only pray bear in mind that you will always have it in your power to escape."

"And Edith?" said Walter, smiling.

"Ah — that indeed!"

Mr. Brune did not choose to tell his son how very little belief he had in the successful termination of that affair; still less was he disposed to try to convince the young fellow that this world only exists by virtue of continual change, that when the course of true love does not run smooth, it very commonly ceases to run

at all, and that nobody is much the worse after a year or two. There are things that one does not say to women and children; and there are also things — this, at least, was Mr. Brune's view — that ought not to be said to young men. Innocence is sacred; and should not the illusions and enthusiasms of youth be sacred too?

Quand j'ai connu la vérité,

J'ai cru c'était une amie;

Quand je l'ai comprise et sentie,

J'en étais déjà dégoûté.

Et pourtant elle est éternelle,

Et ceux qui se sont passés d'elle

Ici-bas ont tout ignoré.

As a man grows older he inevitably learns much respecting his own nature and that of his fellow-mortals which can hardly heighten his respect for the race; and probably few would care to surrender that sad knowledge; but who, on looking back, would wish that he had known at the age of twenty-three all that he knows now?

Mr. Brune, then, held his peace; and as for Walter, he spent the remainder of the evening in golden dreams, towards the realization of which the obnoxious high stool was to act as a stepping-stone. The evening — if he had been in a frame of mind to pay attention to trifles — was not being passed in a very cheerful manner by the trio who sat round the fire near him; for Mr. Brune was silent and thoughtful, and Nellie, for some unexplained reason, thought fit to demean herself towards Mr. Stanniforth in such an exceedingly cold and haughty fashion that she succeeded at length in driving that good-natured and mystified gentleman clean out of the room to seek solace in tobacco. Walter may be pardoned for having failed to notice this by-play. He went up to bed in an exuberantly hopeful mood, and dreamt that he was senior partner in Boulger's bank, that he had just purchased back the estate of his forefathers, and that he was consulting Edith as to whether, when he got his peerage, he should call himself Lord Brune or Lord Longbourne.

The next morning, while he was smoking his pipe in the stable-yard after breakfast, a groom from Longbourne rode up, and delivered to him a note addressed in feminine handwriting, which brought his foolish heart up into his mouth.

"I was to wait for an answer, if you please, sir," said the man.

Walter moved away a few paces and tore open his letter, which did not prove to be from Edith, as he had half hoped

that it might be; nor were its contents of a nature to raise an anxious lover's spirits. "Mrs. Winnington presents her compliments to Mr. Walter Brune, and would be glad to see him for a few minutes, if he will be so good as to call upon her between eleven and twelve o'clock this morning."

Walter faced about, and walked back to the groom. "Say, Mr. Walter Brune's compliments, and he'll turn up all right."

And shortly after having despatched this informal reply, our young friend set out in obedience to Mrs. Winnington's summons. He was not much alarmed, but rather amused, at the absurdity of her writing to him in the third person. It seemed to him that she could not have felt her position to be an impregnable one when she threw up that flimsy species of earthwork. The fact was that he had been so accustomed to hearing Mrs. Winnington laughed at and made a fool of by Marescalchi that he hardly did justice to the good lady's inexorable will and strength of purpose, and had got a sadly mistaken notion into his head that, if he were only firm with her, she would falter and give way.

Yet, for all his stout-heartedness, he felt his hands growing cold and a sinking sensation about the region of the waistcoat as he drew nearer to the house. He had an uncomfortable suspicion that the butler, who admitted him, knew all; and when he was ushered into the same small room in which his father had been engaged with the enemy on the previous evening, he knew that he was looking defiant, and by no means wore that aspect of calm and courteous determination which he would fain have assumed.

Mrs. Winnington was sitting by the fire, reading the *Times*, and at a short distance off, Edith, with her back turned, was gazing intently out of the window at a large spruce-fir, the lower branches of which darkened the room. Walter had a moment of hesitation, not having been prepared to meet Edith, and being in some uncertainty as to the manner in which he ought to greet her. He got out of the difficulty by not greeting her at all — a course which she made the easier for him by never turning her head nor manifesting the slightest consciousness of his presence.

Mrs. Winnington rose with much majesty to her full height, and Walter, to show that he was not frightened, held out his hand, saying cheerfully, "Good morning."

But both the lady's hands were engaged in holding her newspaper, over which she bowed in a stately fashion, without speaking. Walter remained standing before her, thinking that he would allow her to fire the first shot; but as she chose to maintain a frigid silence, he presently took upon himself to open the proceedings by plunging in *medias res* with, —

"I'm afraid you're not best pleased with me, Mrs. Winnington."

"Will you sit down?" she said, not deigning to notice his observation; and the young man took the chair pointed out to him, and sat with his elbows on his knees, twirling his hat, and wishing, perhaps, that the next quarter of an hour were well over.

"I need scarcely tell you," began Mrs. Winnington, "that it is not very pleasant to me to receive you, after what has occurred; but I have sent for you because it seemed to me desirable that our respective positions should be — er —"

"That we should know where we are, in short," suggested Walter, by way of helping her out in a friendly spirit.

Mrs. Winnington gave him one glance of mingled disgust and disdain, but did not refuse to accept the interpolation. "You will probably agree with me," she went on, "that what has to be said had better be said in the fewest possible words. I shall purposely abstain from any comment upon your behavior —"

"I should like you just to admit, though, that I have done the straight thing as far as you are concerned," interrupted Walter. "You are displeased and disappointed, and I'm sure I don't wonder at it; but when you speak of my behavior, I think you ought to allow that I have not been guilty of any deception."

"Not guilty of any deception!" cried Mrs. Winnington, reddening. "Well, I can only say that I think you have behaved as deceitfully and dishonorably as —" Here, however, she came to a full stop. She was aware that she could not lose her temper without at the same time losing something of her dignity, and the occasion was one upon which dignity must be allowed to have the pre-eminence. "But that is not the question," she said, waving the subject away with a lofty sweep of the *Times*.

"Pardon me, but to my mind it is very much the question."

"Not the question," repeated Mrs. Winnington with increased emphasis. "It was not to put you upon your defence, or to listen to it, that I requested you to

call here this morning. I am willing to take the most charitable view of the case, and to assume that you have, or think you have, a real attachment for my daughter." Mrs. Winnington brought out these last words with rather a wry face; but she had considered beforehand what she should say, and was resolute not to swerve from her line of attack. "And if that be so," she continued, "you will certainly not wish to cause her any needless pain or distress. It surely cannot be necessary that I should even mention such a thing as the possibility of your becoming engaged to her; your common sense will tell you that no father or mother could sanction an engagement where there were neither means nor prospect of any on one side or the other. The whole thing is a foolish boy-and-girl scrape which I am sure we should all be glad to forget. Edith has expressed to me her sincere regret and penitence" (here Walter started, and glanced at the figure by the window, which, he fancied, shivered ever so slightly), "and — in fact it is a case of least said soonest mended. Fortunately very few people know of the affair. Your father has been told of it, and for several reasons I thought it best also to tell my daughter Margaret, who is very anxious that there should be no breach between us and your father's family in consequence; but it need never, I should hope, go further. I cannot truly say that we shall be glad to see you often after this, and probably your own good feeling will prompt you to keep out of the way; but occasional chance meetings between you and Edith can hardly be prevented, and I wish you to give me your honor in her presence that you will never, by word or look, recur to — to what is past."

Walter was a good deal disconcerted. For anger and abuse he had been prepared, but not for the tone of studious moderation which Mrs. Winnington had seen fit to adopt, and remembering that, not so many hours before, he had called her an awful old woman in her hearing, and had kissed her daughter under her very nose, he could not but feel that her self-restraint placed him at a considerable disadvantage. He was conscious, too, that, according to all received ideas, her case was a strong one, and his own a deplorably weak one.

"I'm not much of a hand at argument," he confessed at length, "and I can't put things as forcibly as you do, Mrs. Winnington. All the same I have something to say for myself, and I dare say I shall

manage to get it said, if you'll give me time. As to my having no money, I'm afraid that's undeniable; and yesterday I couldn't have pretended that I had anything in the way of prospects to look forward to either; but, oddly enough, there has been a little change since then. My uncle — old Boulger, you know — has offered me a clerkship in his bank, and I've made up my mind to take it. I admit that that doesn't mean much pay for some years; but I believe he means to push me on, if I'm good, and I think I may fairly say that I have a chance of being comfortably off some day. I suppose I shall go up to London almost immediately, and never get away except on bank holidays, so there won't be much risk of those chance meetings that you mentioned."

Mrs. Winnington could not repress a faint murmur of satisfaction.

"All this is awfully vague, I know," Walter continued, "and perhaps I ought not to expect you to sanction a regular engagement, but —" Here a short laugh from Mrs. Winnington arrested him, and he looked up inquiringly.

"Oh, go on, pray go on," said she; "it is quite diverting to listen to you. You would prefer an irregular engagement, I suppose."

"What I was going to say was this: I must acknowledge that, under the circumstances, you have every right to send me about my business, but, for all that, I can't give Edith up at your bidding."

"Really," said Mrs. Winnington, "I do not understand you."

"Well, then, I must try to speak more plainly. I love Edith, and I know that she loves me; and, so long as that is so, I shall consider that we are bound to one another, though we may not be formally engaged. To tell you the truth, Mrs. Winnington, I have my doubts about her ever having expressed repentance to you in the way that you say she did. She may have told you that she was sorry for having vexed you, or that you should have overheard something of what passed between us yesterday; but that she ever said more than that is what I cannot believe."

"You are very insolent," returned Mrs. Winnington coldly; "but I suppose I must bear with you up to the end. Edith, my love, I wish I could avoid paining you; but I am afraid you will have to tell this — very extraordinary young gentleman that you wish to recall any foolish promise that he may have extorted from you."

Upon this Edith at last turned round, and Walter eagerly scanned her features. She was very pale; but she had not been crying, as her lover half hoped, half feared that she might have been, and when she spoke, it was in a steady, monotonous voice. She did not, however, once raise her eyes from the carpet.

"We must part, Walter," she said: "we have made a mistake. You know," she added presently, "I always told you that it was impossible — that it could not be."

"It can be, and it will be," cried Walter, who had now also turned rather white, "if we only have the pluck to be true to ourselves and to one another. It is not of your own free will that you are turning me off like this. Edith, look at me! — listen! I don't ask you to bind yourself formally; I don't even ask to see you, or to be allowed to write to you. I only entreat you to have patience and to wait. That sounds like asking a great deal; but if you really love me it is asking nothing. I won't give up hope until I hear from your own lips that you don't care enough for me to bear a time of uncertainty and waiting."

"Edith!" said Mrs. Winnington solemnly.

The girl looked up, cast an imploring glance first at her mother and then at Walter, and dropped her eyes again, but said never a word.

"Edith!" repeated the instrument of destiny by the fireplace, in somewhat sterner accents.

This time the victim responded to the call. "It is quite true," she said slowly, "I don't care enough —" Her voice died away. Then, all of a sudden, she exclaimed passionately, "Oh, why can't you believe what I say? Why don't you go away? You ought not to persecute me so!"

"I hope," said Mrs. Winnington quietly, "that you are now satisfied."

Poor Walter was not in a state to make any reply. The floor seemed to be rising and falling before him; the walls were spinning round; he had to clutch at the mantelpiece for support. There was a long minute of profound silence, after which he heard Mrs. Winnington's voice, as from the far distance, saying, "Don't you think you had better leave us now?"

He made a strong effort to recover his self-command. "Certainly," he answered. "I have nothing more to do here. It — it's a pity this wasn't said a little sooner. I had no intention of — persecuting any-

body. Good-bye, Mrs. Winnington. Good-bye, Edith, and God bless you always!"

And so, somehow or other, he found himself out in the hall, and was aware that the butler was surveying him with an air of grave surprise.

"Good-bye, Wilson," he said; "you won't see me down here again for many a long day, I expect. I'm going up to London to make my fortune, Wilson."

"Indeed, sir? I am sorry to hear it, sir," answered the man.

"What, sorry to hear that I am going to make my fortune? You must know precious little of the world then, Wilson. Why, bless your soul, money is the only thing worth living for. There's nothing that money can't buy — houses, and lands, and friends, and wives, too, if you want them. Between you and me, Wilson, this world's going to the devil pretty quickly."

Probably Wilson knew perfectly well what was the matter; otherwise he might have been inclined to suspect that young Mr. Brune had been drinking a little more than was good for him. And indeed Walter's gait, as he hastened across the lawn, was scarcely that of a sober man.

Before he had reached the boundary of the garden some one appeared suddenly from a by-path, and caught him by both hands.

"Oh, Walter!" exclaimed Margaret, with the tears in her eyes, "I am so very, very sorry."

Possibly there may have been something like tears in the young fellow's eyes, too; for he winked violently, and cleared his voice several times, without being able to make any articulate reply.

"I know that I have been a great deal to blame for this," Margaret went on penitently. "I ought to have foreseen what was likely to happen; but somehow I never thought of it until — until a short time ago."

Walter now managed to say that he had nothing to complain of, and blamed nobody. He had made a great mistake, and there was no more to be said.

Certainly there was not much to be said in the way of consolation. Had Walter declared himself determined to hope on against hope, Mrs. Stanniforth would have been ready to point out to him how wrong this was, and might even have been persuaded in the long run to write to him, every now and then, and let him have news of the beloved one's state of health — a point upon which he might reasonably be supposed to feel some anx-

iety; but as he chose to give up the game, it was not for her to quarrel with his submissiveness, and no doubt, matters being as they were, it was a good thing that he was about to vanish altogether from the scene. Margaret may have been inwardly a trifled disappointed; but she did not allow the existence of any such feeling to be inferred from her manner, and Walter gave her no time to add much more, one way or the other. He made her a somewhat incoherent speech, thanking her for all her kindness to him in past years, and hoping that she would not forget him, and so departed.

Margaret watched him out of sight, and then returned to the house, where her mother met her with—

"All's well that ends well. But, Margaret dear, I can't help saying that I hope this will be a warning to you to be just a little more careful about making all sorts of people welcome to the house. If anything of this kind were to occur again, I am afraid it would be my duty to think seriously of settling down with dear Edith in a home of our own."

From The Argosy.

THE LATEST WONDER OF ANTWERP.

A PRINTING and publishing establishment of old Flemish construction, some three hundred years ago, and which for one reason and another had been shut up and forgotten, has lately been opened to the public; revealing to the curious in matters of history, all the luxury, the taste, the mode of living, the pursuits and domestic habits of the Flemish so long back as Philip II., husband of our first Mary, of Catholic memory.

This revelation has occurred in Antwerp, that quaint city of ancient Flemish build, where following the rows of houses which line the tortuous streets, you may catch a glimpse of gable ends ornamented with antique devices; niches of saints and other objects of Catholic worship; a city where mayhap a façade of no account gives entrance to a palatial suit of rooms, with corridors leading away into far distance and communicating with cabinets, alcoves, crypts, surprises, descents, ascents, hidden doors, sliding panels, movable tapestry, to testify to the stormy times in which they were constructed, and in which the simple visitor of modern date may easily lose himself. And up through many a dingy street, we shall

find treasures of forgotten history; such as in the muddy Rue des Brasseurs, where the Guild still meet in a room hoary with crumbling antiquity; such as in one by-court where the way is spanned by a veritable "Bridge of Sighs," showing where the victims were covertly led from the Holy Tribunal on one side, to the underground dungeons on the other; and in the dark recesses of which last, the visitor shudders to mark appliances still remaining which testify to the horrors there perpetrated.

Ay! every stone in those dismal prisons cries to heaven of the tortures and histories of poor humanity.

And it is precisely of this ancient city, so rich in vestiges of the past, that I would now testify, concerning a relic unique of its kind, and wonderful for the sincerity and interest of its records.

A printing and publishing establishment founded in the year 1556 by one Plantin, a Frenchman, learned as author of many works, and who at a time when printing was honored as an art, noble above all other arts, fixed his princely headquarters in Antwerp; at the same time that he founded a branch establishment in Leyden and another in Paris.

His heart was in printing; and after many struggles and strivings he gathered up money enough to make a beginning at the above establishment, and was fairly prospering when the Inquisition instituted a suit against him for publishing heretical works. This occurred in 1562. He fled to France, where he remained until the matter had blown over. Then he returned to Antwerp, and re-opened his establishment under happier auspices, and in strict conformity with the rules and regulations of austere orthodoxy.

In 1567 we find Plantin patronized by Philip II., who gave him an order for that wonderful Polyglot Bible, of which I propose hereafter to speak. Besides this, he printed the first missal issued after the authorized version of the Council of Trent; and from that time we find missals, breviaries, psalters, offices of the Virgin, were issuing by thousands from the establishment, until it became famous throughout all Europe. Many potentates in France, in Italy, and elsewhere, made overtures to him with brilliant offers, if he would leave Belgium and settle in their domains; but he preferred remaining where he began; and he prospered.

But his prosperity, so hardly acquired, and earned through so many and difficult struggles, had scarcely begun to yield him

the enjoyment he deserved, when it was cut short by the revolution which burst forth throughout all his Catholic Majesty's dominions in the north. It was the same revolution which Motley narrates so well, in his "Dutch Republic."

Antwerp was sacked in 1576, and for three days given up to the infuriated license of the Spanish soldiery. The prostration which followed was only too indicative of the general ruin of the inhabitants. Plantin was obliged to close his printing establishment once more; and went to Leyden until that town also was sacked by the Duke of Parma; upon which he returned to Antwerp to struggle on as best he might till his death, which took place in 1589.

It is marvellous how this establishment escaped destruction, while palaces all round were burned to the ground, while churches were desecrated, houses and lines of houses, nay, whole quarters of the town, gutted, dismantled, and given up to ruin. Many circumstances combined to protect it.

The founder had no sons to perpetuate his name and work; but his two daughters having taken unto themselves husbands whom he approved and liked, he constituted them his heirs. With that fondness so natural to men of genius who have worked their way up to eminence through worlds of struggle and striving, he bequeathed his whole establishment, with everything pertaining, to such of his descendants as might be capable and willing to carry on the works; and they would preserve the collections he had made, even where improvements and additions were considered necessary.

In accordance with these provisions, the sons-in-law carried on the business; but political troubles had not ended. They broke out anew with redoubled fury so as completely to paralyze the industry of the nation; and of course to ruin its prosperity. From this outbreak, with but rare intervals of peace, Flanders was given up to wars and rumors of war perpetually; and when, during such intervals of quiet as occasionally occurred, the country sought to resume its original activity, there was neither capital to support, nor encouragement from the great to give life to any industrial enterprise.

Plantin's printing establishment was not quite dead, however; it still breathed, even though the pulse was very low; and in 1629 under the peaceful sovereignty of the Infanta Isabel, governess of the Low Countries, it came to the possession of

one of the founder's descendants: Balthazar Moretus Plantin—the most illustrious of the family, and perhaps the only one who deserves notice.

This man, although paralyzed on one side, yet with a clear brain and untiring activity, gave life and movement once more to the business, and it flourished.

He added all the improvements in printing he could lay hold of; and by the help of the greatest painters and sculptors of his time, all of whom he patronized largely and generously, he collected quite a museum of works of art and literature. It is to him that is due all that rare acquisition of manuscripts, paintings, etchings, engravings, and other such treasures, which have given to those old rooms so inestimable a value.

After the death of Balthazar the establishment began to decline.

It does not appear as if the family cared much to associate themselves with its working. Balthazar's son, in honor of his father, was given titles of nobility by the king of Spain, with permission to continue the work of printing under his name.

But it is probable the title swamped the work, for it continued to go down year after year, until another revolution broke out, and somewhere about the year 1746, it was finally closed. After this the establishment may be said to have existed only in name.

Belgium was no longer a country where the arts might flourish. The allies made of it a general battle-field, where they marched and countermarched, and slaughtered one another, continually. Marlborough on one side, and the generals of Louis XIV. on the other, swept the plains before them, and marked their course by devastation, fire, and ruin.

We cannot wonder therefore if the descendants of Plantin sought to improve their fortunes in other ways than the dead industry of printing and publishing.

After a while the buildings which had once entertained princes and nobles, and whose halls and corridors had resounded to the clatter of work and the manufacture of civilization, these so honored buildings were degraded and turned into stables, to be hired out to the keepers of horses. The mangers were constructed of the precious old woodwork which had formed the doors. The beautiful carvings which had adorned the staircases and entrances, were torn away from their holdings, and thrown into the garret out of sight; while books, Bibles, pictures, manuscripts, all of priceless value, were

tumbled into the loft, and there left to moulder under the accumulating layer of dust and damp; like bones in a forgotten grave.

Somewhere about the beginning of this century the stables and coach-houses came by inheritance to a bachelor, the last male descendant of the Plantins; when one day quite by accident, an antiquary strolled in while the master was out, and took to sauntering about the premises; perhaps struck by the antiquated look of the building. During his peregrinations he spied out a piece of sculptured wood which formed part of a shelf in one of the outbuildings; or, as some say, it was the handle of an old tub which first attracted his attention. However this may be, his curiosity was aroused. By-and-by a conversation with the master resulted in a voyage of discovery through the deserted passages of the building, and to the piled-up lumber-rooms in the garret, where they came upon a heap of heterogeneous materials, repulsively dirty. It is said the dust flew into their faces as they entered, and nearly choked them.

Other visitors followed, and little by little the owner was awakened to the knowledge that his lofts and lumber-rooms held curiosities of no small interest to the learned. He also found to his cost, that visitors valued them, and coveted them. Leaves were torn out of his illuminated Bibles and manuscripts, chips and pieces broken off from his wood-carvings; and although he made his own two nieces accompany the visitors, and although these, one on each side, watched and closely guarded the treasures on view, nevertheless the pilfering went on just as usual. At last, thoroughly disgusted with the meanness and dishonesty of lovers of art, he shut up his treasures and the rooms which held them; and from that time obstinately refused to open them even to give the place an airing.

Years passed, and still the rooms were closed. But the strangeness of the matter got wind, and coming to the ears of the municipality they deputed some gentlemen to negotiate the purchase, which was finally effected in 1877. The buildings with all their treasures then passed entirely into the hands of the town.

It was not opened immediately to the public, for the work of restoration took a long time. They had to rescue, to dig out and replace the fragments of art which were heaped in ignominious forgetfulness in by-places, or scattered about in corners like castaway rubbish. And it

was not till 1880 that they were able to throw open to the public a museum unrivalled in the world for its rarity and historical interest.

But although the rooms are now open to the public the collection is by no means completed yet. The work of restoration still goes on even at this day. I have it from members of the family still living that there are piles and piles of volumes in the garrets not yet examined, not yet lifted from their cover of dust; fragments of priceless wood-carving not yet restored to the place from which they were wrenched; pillars, pilasters, and balustrades lying unpaired and unused about the floor, waiting for the good time to come when they may be suffered to assert their dignity, and hold their own. It may be some time yet before this desired end may come, for the Belgians are a deliberate people and not at all disposed to spoil their work by too much hurry. The front of the house as it now stands is of modern date, quite plain, and with nothing to indicate the rare treasures it contains. But the corridor once passed, and entrance gained to the hall on the right, the visitor becomes sensible of another air and moral atmosphere. Everything assumes a strange form and style; the hearth alone excites wonder by the strangeness and oddity of its appearance. It has porcelain bricks at the back and sides, and primitively shaped dogs to hold the large logs of wood which should warm the room; while, placed to defend the wall behind, are metal plates representing raised figures, the unmistakable culprits of Eden in the act of banqueting on forbidden apples, and for their sins left there to fry in effigy.

We passed into the office where the workmen had their names registered, and were paid their wages. The balance is still there, where the money was weighed previous to its payment. The book lay open, where their claims were jotted down, and the rude ink-bottle where the pen was dipped; but the pen itself was gone, which one would like to have seen. Little pigeon-holes, hung up against the wall, next attracted my attention as belonging to the past, for they are no longer seen or used in any office that I know of.

From thence into the long printing-room, where indeed the wonders begin. The printing-presses are ranged in two rows down the sides, leaving a wide space in the middle for free passage to the workmen and superintendents: each printing-press, commencing from the lower

end, being an improvement on the last. Here we see portions of books begun, but never finished, side by side with the manuscripts from which the printing was being copied. As we were led from one room to another, our astonishment rose in proportion to the luxury of art more and more displayed on every side, in the storied pictures, cabinets, carvings in ivory, wood-sculptures too, and other treasures lavished on an establishment where work was constantly carried on. And this in a measure and with a taste of which we of a later date, and in more civilized times, can have but little idea.

Thence we were ushered into the room where proof sheets were corrected, some of them lying there unfinished; as if the corrector, interrupted in his task by some public disorder, had gone out to see, and never returned.

In an adjoining room the proof sheets were ready to be pressed into their vellum covers to form books. Here also is the foundry where types were cast, the rude furnaces and simple appliances bearing testimony to their age; the moulds, the vessels for holding the molten liquid, the quaint queer bellows, the files, the crucibles, and a quantity of other instruments lying about exactly in the place where they seem to have been suddenly abandoned by the workmen a hundred and fifty years ago. The lamps too, of the rudest contrivance, were still older, and must have existed, one would think, from the days of Plantin himself, all standing out on a zigzag hold from the wall asking to be filled. The tables, stools, too, all just as they were left.

There are libraries lined with books in old vellum covers suggestive of untold lore and legends of times we wot not of. Apartments occupied by the family, for it appears Plantin lived in his establishment. And here we could in a measure follow the habits and customs of his day — not expending their measure of luxury in details anywhere — not in nicknacks or little conveniences such as we, of modern days, have come to consider as necessities of life; but largely and grandly in that gorgeous style which marked the old Flemish taste of the period, and which befitted a place visited by royalty and frequented by all the princes and nobles of the day. Rich carvings on every door and lintel with a finish which no modern art can surpass and scarcely rival. Every balustrade, every corner, panel, and window, even the dado round the room, is

carved and sculptured. The rafters which, after the fashion of the day, were left bare to view, are laid in rows as regular as the rungs of a ladder, all finely cut and rendered smooth, with here and there a graceful acanthus leaf to vary the monotony of form, bending in soft outlines over the woodwork it seems to grasp, as if meant to perpetuate that exuberance of fancy which sought to beautify whatever the hand may touch. From this we learn of what mettle the workmen were made in those days; how cathedrals were built and pulpits carved; and how honored the men who were called in to give importance and beauty to places of public resort; men of mind, who stamped on every inch of their work their own mark of thought and genius, and sent messages to posterity to say how they too had faculties, and had used them. Oak must have been plentiful in those days. We find it used for the commonest purposes, and in every nook and corner standing out, black as ink, testifying to the age of the wood and the age of the work upon it.

There are rooms hung with veritable Gobelin, one of them imitating so closely the leaves of the horse-chestnut and thistle, that I could almost have grasped it with my hand. The colors too are surprisingly vivid considering their age. However, the flesh tints of the figures have faded, thereby proving the fugitive nature of Gobelin's crimson.

In other rooms again, stamped Cordova leather hangs along the sides with quaint, large, showy patterns.

Elsewhere I marked the walls lined with silk, mounted on wooden frames, such as were in use a hundred and fifty years ago.

There is a room for meeting, I suppose, of ministers and authorities who may have come here to examine the publications, whether to censure or approve.

There is one room which goes by the name of Juste Lipse, the celebrated Dutch philosopher and intimate friend of Plantin, to whose grandson he was tutor. This great man's works were printed and published here.

There is the dining-room, where the family dined and princes banqueted. Also Madame Plantin's private apartment with a four-post bedstead elaborately carved, and its curtains of antique stuff looped up in deliciously prim festoons to the tester; the quilt also, which, as folks say, was worked by that illustrious lady herself some three hundred years ago.

Here also is the sculptured prie-dieu on which she daily knelt before a large-sized engraving of the Crucifixion, very valuable it is said; a sculptured press where the lady stored her neatly folded linen, and other things of similar interest and value.

Near this, again, we are introduced to the children's room, with a curtained alcove, where the two little girls were wont to nestle at night after they had said their prayers at the mother's knee, and received her evening blessing. This curtained alcove interested me, for I have noticed the same contrivance in remote corners of Flanders and in forgotten nooks in Wales.

Adjoining here again is a room devoted to the spinet, such a one as would rejoice the heart of lovers of antique instruments. The notes are of ivory and number but one octave only, while the strings stretch out ad infinitum and in the wildest system of spinet manufacture. I did not stay to ascertain the age of the spinet. But it could not have belonged to Madame Plantin, as in her time spinets had not been invented. Virginals, I believe, were then in use. It must have been made at a later date, a hundred and fifty years ago, when last the place was inhabited by the possessing family.

But the greatest wonder to me was the room where the Bibles and illuminated missals are kept, under long glass cases.

There are illuminated Bibles written by the hand long before Archbishop Ussher divided the Sacred Writ into chapter and verse; and, indeed, long before printing was invented. One of them bore the date 900.

Here also the great, grand Polyglot Bible ordered by Philip II., to obtain which the directors of our own British Museum have vainly offered large sums. The illuminations of this and the other Bibles are exquisitely beautiful, in design, color, execution, and finish. And long and eagerly did I linger here to take in what of it I could, but our party were waiting and I was hurried on to other parts. The walls of this long room were covered with works of art — Rubens, Vandyke, Jordaens, Boschaert, Vandenbrack and others, figuring in brilliant and precious form so as to complete a most valuable picture-gallery. These were collected by that Balthazar Plantin in 1629

who revived the establishment by his activity and sumptuous taste for art.

There are two cabinets here of elegant and elaborate workmanship, the designs much too wonderful to escape my memory, even among so many objects of overwhelming interest, and a clock of the same style and make, given to the family by a member of the house of Austria. I never saw a more exquisite scroll design.

There is a room filled with woodcuts, all kept under glass — letters large and small intended for ushering in an especial chapter; heraldic devices, armorial bearings, patterns, scrolls, frontispieces of most graceful design; all cut in the blackest oak and all drawn and designed by the greatest artists of the day.

The etching room is no less wonderful and interesting. Both copper and proof, side by side, ranged in the same fashion and equally guarded under glass.

Then the engraving room — a museum of treasures in itself, such as no sum of money could purchase. The only engraving Rubens ever executed is seen in this collection.

Also a room dedicated to the diplomas given to the founder, where among the rest are letters from Philip II. and the Duke of Alva. And here, hung up against the wall, is another precious document, containing the written regulations for workmen and the tariff of their wages.

Neither must I forget the shop where books were sold over the counter; not open to the street like vulgar boutiques; but gained by a handsome street door and up stone steps flanked with balustrades in keeping with the rest.

Even the paved courtyard possesses an interest and charm of its own, and delivers its individual message from the day when it was planted, they say, by Plantin's own hand. An ancient vine, black as ink, and, although three hundred years of age, still gives out vigorously rich leaves and tendrils in the spring, and a wealth of grapes in autumn.

This is, after all, but an incomplete sketch of a museum unique of its kind, and so rich in interest that perhaps no attempt at description could do it justice.

A catalogue has been printed and is sold on the premises; and to its pages I must refer such visitors as may be induced through the perusal of these lines to visit the latest and greatest wonder of Antwerp.

MARCELLA F. WILKINS.

From St. James's Gazette.

ST. BERNARDS.

THE first thing which must have struck anybody, at the great show of St. Bernard dogs lately held under the auspices of the St. Bernard Club, is that the type of the dog called of St. Bernard is still under process of development. We shall probably get to him by-and-by; but we have hardly arrived at him yet. Among the two hundred and fifty noble beasts exhibited, some of which were set down at a price exceeding that of a large borough to a candidate for Parliament, there was much variety of form and of character. Many of them might have passed in the catalogue as only big mastiffs; while the parents of others must certainly have been on visiting terms with a family of colleys. We need not enter into the difference as to texture of coat, for it is as yet a moot point whether the true St. Bernard—granting that there ever was such a breed—was rough or smooth. There is as much to be said on one side of the controversy as on the other. Probably the monks of the hospice, when they had a traveller to fetch out of the snow, did not lay any great stress on the length of hair of the dog despatched on that errand. But admitting that there may be true St. Bernards of any kind of coat or of any color, there still remain some points to be settled on which the judges appear to be by no means unanimous. Any one who took the trouble to compare the prize-winners at Knightsbridge must have been puzzled to discover what, beyond size and weight, constitutes a true St. Bernard. If "Champion Barry," the winner of one hundred and fifty-seven cups and prizes, is a typical St. Bernard, then the award of a first prize to "Beauchief" must be regarded as a capricious judgment, for certainly no two large dogs could be more unlike than Barry and Beauchief. To add to the confusion there were two dogs under the "Foreign Class" hailing directly from Switzerland, which were unlike any of the prize-winners and very much smaller. And the climax of our perplexity is reached when we find the Reverend Mr. Macdona giving the first prize in the class for "champion rough-coated dogs" to "Save," who is deficient in double dew-claws. Now, if there is any judge of St. Bernards who is supposed to know the breed, it is Mr. Macdona; and if there is any point on which Mr. Macdona has hitherto been firm, it is

the double dew-claws. What is the precise value of the double dew-claw? Nobody has yet been able to discover; but if there is one thing more than another that goes to make the perfect St. Bernard, it is this abnormal superfluity of claw. Present the dew-claw, the dog is a true St. Bernard; absent the dew-claw, and he is a mongrel. Such is the faith under which we have been reared by the Reverend Mr. Macdona himself. The Père Metroz, monk of the hospice, has made solemn affirmation that to the true race of the St. Bernards, bred for a thousand years, it is essential to have double dew-claws. Yet here is an animal allowed to win the chief prize at the show who is wanting in this patent of purity.

The conclusion is irresistible that we have no certain marks by which to know a true St. Bernard. The dog is a very noble dog, of sublime appearance and most gentlemanly manners; but the sooner we drop the hospice legend the better. The dogs which were shown last week at Knightsbridge never could have been reared among mountain snows, nor are they adapted to a monastic life. To all intents and purposes the animal which the St. Bernard Club has taken under its special charge is an English dog, who is no more from St. Bernard than the spaniel is from Spain and the spotted dog from Dalmatia. He is the product of artificial selection and unlimited good feeding; one result of which is to have made him at least one-half as big again as the native dog of the Alps. We cannot look upon such a dog as "Save" without being impelled to say, with Henry V., "Those limbs were made in England." Nor is it possible to avoid the conviction that the St. Bernard of the shows is but a larger kind of mastiff, whose physical enlargement has been obtained at the sacrifice of some of those moral qualities which distinguish the old-fashioned English dog. It is true that connoisseurs speak of "a typical head" in connection with their favorite dogs, and there is doubtless a character of head belonging to the St. Bernard which is to be seen in no other dog. But there is not much in a head after all, and the rest is but bigness. Magnificent as he is in form and bulk, we fear it must be said that the St. Bernard is one of the most useless of the dog kind. His intelligence is but of a very ordinary sort. His courage must be taken very much upon trust, and is probably inferior to that of dogs of lesser

stature. In native sagacity he is certainly deficient. As a watch-dog he cannot compare with the mastiff. He is too big for the house and too grand for the kennel. As a companion, his bulk is objectionable; one might as well be familiar with a jackass or romp with a brown bear. He is supposed to be useful as a "protector," but it is a protection which savors very much of proprietorship. To take him out for a walk is to reduce yourself to be led by your dog, instead of your leading him. To correct him is a delicate operation, which may lead to unpleasant results. There is nothing a St. Bernard can do to justify his existence; and the digging of belated wayfarers out of the snow affords but a narrow opening for a dog in this country. The probabilities are that a modern St. Bernard would not know what to do with a man whom he discovered in a mountain pass, except to

eat him. For all that, the St. Bernard has many friends; and the fact that there is a club established for his special cultivation is a proof of the extent to which the taste for this particular kind of dog has spread. His grandeur of aspect and his general amiability entitle him to our respect; his very helplessness is a claim upon our sympathy. There is something melancholy in a dog of a hundred and forty pounds' weight having no motive whatever in life, and going about, with all his tremendous potentiality of bite, unable to do anything to repay the love and meat which have been expended on his education. Yet, as a result of what may be done in the cultivation of the dog, the St. Bernard is stupendous. He will continue to have his admirers, and probably to grow bigger and bigger as the years advance, a magnificent testimony of British skill in the art of breeding.

A SLIDING MOUNTAIN IN OREGON.—The government engineers engaged upon the ship canal around the rapids where the Columbia River cuts through the Cascade Mountains, and the engineers of the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company, whose railroad runs beside the government canal, have discovered that a point of the mountains, of tremendous height and three miles in extent, is moving down an incline into the river. The fact of a moving mountain is strange, but not incomprehensible. It seems, says an intelligent correspondent of the *New York Times*, that the great river and the ravines that point to it have cut their way down through a superincumbent mass of basalt into a substratum of sandstone. This sandstone, we will suppose, presents a smooth surface, with an incline toward the river; the river cuts under the basalt into the sandstone, and the natural effect is for the superincumbent basalt, acting like a similar formation of ice in a glacier, to slide down hill. The same gentleman says, on the authority of Mr. Thielson, engineer in chief of the Western Division of the Northern Pacific Railroad, that when an examination was made a year ago of a disused portage tramway past that point, the track was found to be twisted as much as seven or eight feet out of the true line in some places, caused beyond doubt by a movement of the mountain. It seemed certain to Mr. Thielson that there was a movement of a tremendous mountain spur opposite this piece of road. The correspondent goes on to say: "It is a fact well known to all river men that above the

Cascades, where the river is tranquil, the waters cover a submerged forest, whose trunks still stand with their projecting limbs to attest some wonderful phenomenon. It has been a query in the minds of all as to what convulsion of nature or process of time caused this overflow of waters. Over thirty years ago I saw the dead trunks standing beneath the waves, and the interest in this connection was increased by learning from the Indians that among their traditions was one that ages since the mountains rose precipitously at the river's side, and a great arch of stone spanned the river from shore to shore, and that their canoes passed under it. Tradition further says that in course of time a great earthquake threw down the arch and blocked the river, causing the cascades as we see them now. It is not often that Indian tradition is so specific in detail. As the records of the aborigines of this region are very transient, it is possible that this story rests on some fact of natural history of not very remote occurrence. Joining tradition and speculation with the discoveries and deductions of science, we must conclude that some convulsion of nature has thrown great masses of rock into the stream sufficient to deaden its flow for eight miles above and to submerge the forests just above the rapids. Mr. Brazee, who has been engineer of the navigation company that owned the portage road around the falls, informs me that he has watched the movements of the mountain for twenty years, and that it is no myth."

Scientific American.